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Dec. 18, 1909.

THE QUIVER

CHRISTMAS NUMBER·1909



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THE MOST EFFICACIOUS REMEDY FOR Consumption

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Preserves, Beautifies, Nourishes it.
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We have told you already how Mellin's Food is starch-free, how it nourishes a baby from birth, how, when mixed with fresh milk, it is an exact substitute for mother's milk. Now we will send you a free sample bottle of Mellin's Food, if you will cut out the top half of the print of bottle in this advertisement and forward same to us, mentioning this publication.

Mellin's Food

By means of
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the difficulty which infants generally find in digesting cow's milk alone is entirely overcome.

Either of the following :-

"**THE CARE OF INFANTS**," a work of 96 pages, dealing with the feeding and rearing of infants from birth.

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puts the
goodness
into soups and
stews and gravies.

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Postage paid one way

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DRESSES	Dry Cleaned	4/- ea.
BLouses	"	1/3 ea.
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is a title which may be legitimately applied to BEECHAM'S PILLS. It is a noteworthy fact that millions of people the world over have derived great and lasting benefit from them. In the matter of medicine continued popularity is a distinct and irrefutable proof of merit. If after a period of sixty years it is an indisputable fact that BEECHAM'S PILLS are more popular than ever, surely there can be no better testimony to their valuable medicinal properties. Again, BEECHAM'S PILLS have established their great reputation without the aid of published testimonials; they have spoken for themselves, and have been recommended by friends to friends. In the case of BEECHAM'S PILLS you have a medicine which is absolutely unique in the immense curative extent of its activities. It does good to all sorts and conditions of people of every race, clime, and age. You also will receive benefit from taking

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Sold everywhere in boxes, price 1s. 1½d. (56 pills) and 2s. 9d. (168 pills).

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LONGCLOTHS,
NAINSOOKS, CAMBRICS,
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Entertainments all Day

Wonderful Working Set Pieces.

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Presents for all
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The Largest British Mutual Office

Assets
£19,500,000

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Agencies in all the Principal Towns in the United Kingdom.

THE MARVELLOUS EAR-PHONE

A Wireless Telephone for the Ear. Excels anything ever invented to Restore the Hearing. The Discovery of Professor Edward Hoffmann, Author of "The Sense of Hearing."

A BOON For Deaf People

If you are Deaf you need remain Deaf no longer, unless your trouble dates from birth, or that your Sense of Hearing is totally paralysed. Professor Hoffmann's Ear-Phone will enable you to hear as well and as distinctly as anybody could wish. This clever invention is a miniature wireless telephone. It will stop all roarings in the head; it is quite invisible, and simple to wear; it is absolutely safe, and causes no discomfort whatsoever. By the aid of the Ear-Phone the sound waves are concentrated on the drum of the Ear, and to the "hard of hearing" it acts much as a pair of spectacles act to the short-sighted, the Natural Hearing is improved in a remarkable manner.

If you will write to Prof. HOFFMANN, at Dept. 40r, 54, Duke Street, Oxford Street, London, W., you will receive, post free and gratis, a copy of his illustrated Book, "The Sense of Hearing; how it is Impaired, and how it may be Restored." All who have read this Book say it is the most interesting and helpful Book ever written for the Deaf and "Hard of Hearing."



"Yes, Madam, patterns of
PATON'S
Alloa KNITTING WOOLS & YARNS
are sent FREE on application to
John Paton, Son & Co., Ltd., Alloa, Scotland,
or to 192, Aldersgate St., London, E.C."

A FREE GIFT FOR YOUR DRESSING-TABLE.

Follow the Instructions and use the Toilet Requisites given in Each Presentation Package, and You will Greatly Increase the Permanent Beauty and Glorious Luxuriance of Your Hair.

SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS TO-DAY TO ENGLAND'S LEADING AUTHORITY ON THE HAIR, AND ONE OF THESE GIFT OUTFITS WILL BE DELIVERED TO YOU THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW.

It is not often that we hear of so magnificent a distribution of gifts as this one.

These Free Outfits (one of which any reader of *The Quiver* can possess for himself or herself) contains absolutely everything required for growing a luxuriant and beautiful head of hair, free from any sign of weakness, baldness, lack of colour or lustre.

They contain the final results of the many years' experience and study Mr. Edwards has given to the subject of growing healthy and beautiful hair, even on heads which have been troubled with baldness or greyness for years.

The packages are now going out. Many of them have already been delivered. Thousands of ladies and gentlemen are now using the materials they contain according to Mr. Edwards' secret instructions, and are finding their reward in the increased growth, gloss, and colour of their hair.

It is time for you to secure your share in this distribution, and it is not an opportunity to be missed. Here, at the foot of the page, you will find a coupon. Cut it out, fill in your name and address, and send it to Mr. Edwards. And in return the day after to-morrow you will receive from the hands of your postman one of these splendid presentation Toilet Outfits containing:

1. A Book of Hair Toilet Recipes by Mr. Edwards, including the secret direction for the famous "three-minutes-a-day" "Harlene Hair-Drill," which has so marvellous an effect in improving the strength and beauty of the hair of those who try it, including members of Royal and Titled Families.

2. A Bottle of Edwards' "Harlene-for-the-Hair" (the merits of which, as a Hair Beautifier, Tonic, and Restorative, need no description here), containing sufficient "Harlene" for a full week's course of the above-mentioned "Hair-Drill."

3. A Supply of Edwards' Cremex Shampoo Powder for the Scalp, which should be used at least once a week in order to refresh and invigorate the scalp, and thus prepare it for the Hair-growing Action of "Harlene Hair-Drill."

The time to write for this Free Gift is now.

The coupon below entitles you to one of these Outfits.

Cut it out, fill in your name and address, enclose 3d. in stamps, and post it to Edwards' Harlene Co., 95 and 96, High Holborn, London, W.C., and the Outfit will be sent to you through the post immediately, so that you will be able to receive it the day after to-morrow.

By enclosing a shilling postal order you may obtain six additional Cremex Shampoo Powders, the discovery of which forms the most valuable addition to the art of Hair Culture made since the origin of "Harlene Hair-Drill."

Further supplies of "Harlene" for "Hair-Drill" can be obtained in 1s., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. bottles from all leading chemists and stores in the United Kingdom, or direct from the "Harlene" offices, by sending postal order for amount required.



Every reader who would like to know how to cultivate his or her hair to its greatest thickness, length, and beauty of appearance, should send for one of these Free Toilet Outfits for the dressing-table. Each packet contains materials and instructions how to renew the hair's health, or how to preserve it in good condition, complete or partial, whilst the colour, as long as life lasts, will retain its richness of hue, thereby preserving the youthful appearance. Write your name and address on the following coupon, cut it out, and send it to the address given thereon, and your postage will, by return of post, deliver to your home the Free Toilet Outfit.

FREE TRIAL COUPON.

The EDWARDS' HARLENE CO.,
95 and 96, High Holborn, London, W.C.

I desire to try "Harlene Hair-Drill," and will accept your offer to readers of the Magazine. I enclose 3d. in stamps for postage to the following address in any part of the world.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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GIVE YOUR BOY & GIRL A KODAK
and throw open to them one of the simplest
and most delightful pursuits of to-day.
The wonderful little No. 1 Brownie
costs only five shillings and gives beautiful pictures.
There is no difficulty about Kodak photography, and no darkroom.

"Smith Major, Myself and a Brownie."
our latest booklet will interest and
amuse you. Send for a copy naming
this Magazine.

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28, Brompton Rd., S.W.; 69 Newgate-st., E.C. 4; 116 Pall Mall, W.; 171-173,
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**RUGS
GIVEN
AWAY**

NEW DESIGNS

Repeat Orders received from the Royal Palace Stockholm

5/6

**Patronized by H.M. the QUEEN OF SWEDEN.
GUARANTEED GENUINE BARGAINS.**

THIS PHENOMENAL OFFER is made to the Readers of THE QUIVER, 1/12/1909. On receipt of P.O. for 5/6 we will forward DIRECT FROM OUR LOOMS to your address one of our Prudential Real Seamless Woven Half-Guinea

(Regd.)

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suitable for Drawing Room, Dining Room, Bedroom, &c., handsomely bordered, in Thirty Turkey patterns and fashionable self-shades of Crimson, Greens, Blues, and Art Colours, to suit all requirements, and LARGE ENOUGH TO COVER ANY ORDINARY-SIZED ROOM. These Carpets will be sent out as Sample Carpets, with

FREE RUG,

thus showing the identical quality we supply in all sizes. They are made of material equal to wool, and being a speciality of our own, can only be obtained direct from our Looms, thus saving the Purchaser all Middle Profits. OVER 400,000 SOLD DURING THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS. Money willingly returned if not approved. Thousands of Repeat Orders and Unsolicited Testimonials received.

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with every Carpet we shall ABSOLUTELY GIVE AWAY a very handsome Rug to match, or we will send two carpets and TWO RUGS for **10/6**

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(Dept. Q.)

Manufacturers, Importers, and Merchants.
WOODSLEY ROAD, LEEDS.

YOU NEED NOT SUFFER FROM LOSS OF HAIR.

MR. GEO. R. SIMS'

Tatcho**YOUR HONEST, TRUSTY,
GENUINE HAIR GROWER**

POSITIVELY PRODUCES HAIR.

STOPS IT FALLING OUT.

KEEPS IT ITS NATURAL COLOUR.

PREVENTS THE HAIR GOING GREY.

WHAT "TATCHO" MEANS.

The word "true," as defined in Chambers' 20th Century Dictionary, means "agreeing with fact, worthy of belief or confidence, certain, trusty, genuine, right, honest." In the Romany language the word for "true" is "Tatcho." For this reason Mr. Geo. R. Sims selected the word "Tatcho" for his discovery of the true hair grower. The definition fits exactly. "Tatcho" is Romany for "true." Like the word "true" in the English language, "Tatcho" "agrees with fact, is worthy of belief or confidence, certain, trusty, genuine, right, honest."

THE DISCOVERY OF TATCHO.

Though the story of the discovery of Tatcho has been recounted in nearly every scientific paper in the Kingdom, the subject of a true hair grower is of such strong human interest that the story will bear repetition.

"When I discovered the preparation which is known as Tatcho I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders," said Mr. Geo. R. Sims to the Editor of the *Daily Mail*. "Look at my hair now. Look at the colour; isn't that convincing evidence of the value of my preparation? In time people got to know that I had discovered a renewer that had worked wonders in my own case. Then the trouble began.

"Letters in thousands poured in to me from men and women in every quarter of the world, from all parts of the kingdom, from America, India, Africa, China, and Australia. The work of answering the letters was enormous, and as far as possible the desired information was supplied; but it became quite evident that at the rate at which the demand was increasing I should very soon need a large staff of clerks to attend solely to the hair-renewer department of correspondence.

"In consequence, I said to myself, Why should this thing go on? If the public wants my hair renewer, the public shall have it; but the demand must be met in the ordinary business-like way. So I resolved to place the genuine article, under the name of Tatcho, which is the Romany word for 'genuine,' within reach of all, and with the assistance of a number of gentlemen, possessing the necessary commercial facilities, that has been accomplished.

"Ladies confirm my good opinion of it as a dressing for daily use. The famous novelist, 'Rita,' writes: 'Tatcho in my opinion is the only remedy worthy the name of hair restorer. It is the only remedy I have found serviceable after years of trying.'

This is the whole story of the hair renewer discovered by Mr. Geo. R. Sims.

To undertake the introduction of Tatcho to the public a wealthy syndicate was formed, embracing several of the best-known scientific, literary, and commercial names in London, and under the title of The Geo. R. Sims' Hair Restorer Co. is introducing Tatcho to the toilet table of every member of the King's vast Empire.

TATCHO is sold by Chemists and Stores all over the world in bottles at 1/-, 2/9, and 4/6.



Mr. Geo. R. Sims, the discoverer of Tatcho, the Trusty, Honest Hair Grower.

GUARANTEE.—I guarantee that this preparation is made according to the formulas recommended by me.

Geo R Sims

WHAT TATCHO IS.

TATCHO is a brilliant spirituous tonic, the colour of whisky, free from all grease. A sprinkle of a few drops on the scalp, and five minutes with the brush daily works marvels with every head of hair, but more especially with those that have not received their quantum of care.

TATCHO acts as an invigorating tonic. It stops the hair falling, creates a luxuriant growth, and imparts to it a bright and youthful lustre.

TATCHO is not a dye, and contains no colouring matter or any harmful ingredient.

Send this Coupon for a Full Size 4/6 Bottle of Tatcho.

Provided this coupon is sent to the Chief Chemist, Tatcho Laboratories, Kingsway, London, we bind ourselves to send you one of the large trial bottles of Mr. Geo. R. Sims' Hair Grower, Tatcho, 4/6 size, with the sum of 1/10, post free, in a plain sealed package. This special offer is made with the object of enabling the public to prove its superlative value, and to avoid the necessity for extravagant outlay in advertising.

Cut along Dotted Line. Fill in and Mail To-day.

Name.....

Address.....

Q., Dec., 1909.

Has Father
Xmas Got
You On His
List?



When you buy Xmas Presents—remember an Onoto Self-Filling Safety Fountain Pen is a gift every man, woman and child you know will appreciate and use. It is the fountain pen that fills itself and cannot leak—a perfect writing implement. British made and guaranteed by its makers.

Price at all stationers, jewellers, etc., from **10/6** to **£6**, packed ready for posting. Booklet about it free on application to
Thos. De La Rue & Co., Ltd., 235, Bunhill Row, London, E.C.

Onoto
Self-Filling - - Safety Fountain **Pen**

IMPORTANT.—For those who require a larger pen with a very flexible nib, a special model—the new "G." has been put on the market. It is exceptional value for the money. Try this new "G." at your stationers.

Also ask for Onoto Ink—the best for Fountain and all other Pens.

AN ALL-BRITISH MACHINE

21/-

JIG
SAWING

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FRET
CUTTING

21/-

Thousands of these machines are being sold. Nothing will please a boy better.

The Christmas festivities will be more enjoyable if you make jig saw puzzles with your own machine.

The home will be beautified by the fretwork models your boy can execute.

Write at once to—

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DEREHAM, NORFOLK.

The QUEEN'S HOSPITAL
FOR CHILDREN,

HACKNEY ROAD,
BETHNAL
GREEN,
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late "North Eastern" Hospital.

130 beds always full.

Unless help
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211,000 a year expenditure.
Assured income under £1,000.

PLEASE
HELP.

half the
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closed.

30,000 Out-Patients annually.
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No funds in hand.

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**PROCTOR'S
PINELYPTUS
PASTILLES**

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For CHEST, THROAT, and VOICE

A Boon for Asthma, Cough, Catarrh.

Invaluable to Speakers, Singers, and Teachers.

CARDINAL VAUGHAN wrote: "I have always found Proctor's Pinelyptus Pastilles efficacious."

MADAME SARAN BERNHARDT "Use

Proctor's Pinelyptus Pastilles with great success for Thor,

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SIR HENRY IRVING wrote: "Proctor's Pinelyptus Pastilles are excellent."

MISS ELLEN TERRY "Consider Proctor's

Pinelyptus Pastilles better than any other Lassage a

Pastille for the Voice."

Sold only in boxes, 1/- and 2/6, by Chemists and

Stores, or posted from

PROCTOR'S PINELYPTUS DEPOT, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

W. HARBROW, Iron Building Works,
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Telegrams—“Economical, London.”

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BUILDINGS SHIPPED AND ERECTED IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD.

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Possess the qualities of
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Best of all Fountpens
Serviceable
Lasting
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Facility of Despatch
Reasonable Cost

*Not Toys, but real busy helps for
the busy man, woman or student
for many years*

The Prices are—
820 down to 10/6.

Made in solid gold mounted with gems, plain gold, rolled gold, silver, vulcanite with gold bands, or simply plain vulcanite. Designs by the dozen to select from. However, every "Swan" is of the "Swan" standard quality, and guaranteed.

SEE THE NEW SIZE "SWANS"
No. 2, 13/- & 17/6 ; No. 4, 20/- & 25/-

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Branches—93, Cheapside, E.C.; 95a, Regent Street, W.; 3, Exchange Street, MANCHESTER; 10, Rue Neuve, BRUSSELS; Brentano's, 37, Ave. de l'Opéra, PARIS; and at NEW YORK and CHICAGO.

Sold by all Stationers and Jewellers.

PROTECTS FROM "WINTER'S COLD"

Weather changes, cold winds, frosty or damp air play havoc with the skin, and make ICILMA FLUOR CREAM an absolute necessity to all who wish to preserve a clear healthy complexion throughout the winter.

This famous greaseless cream never fails to keep the skin clear, smooth and white—in perfect tone in all weathers. This is due to the Icilma Natural Water which it largely contains. Nothing else known has the same beneficial effect.



Icilma Fluor Cream

is an exquisite foamy cream containing no grease, oil or fat. It is cleanly in use, cannot grow hair and needs no powder to hide it. The Icilma Natural Water in it stimulates the skin to healthy activity and speedily removes chaps, roughness, redness and all unpleasant conditions due to weather. A little rubbed in every day will keep the skin in perfect natural beauty. Especially useful to men before and after shaving.

Sold everywhere in 1/- pots.

A box of dainty samples of Icilma Toilet Preparations, including the new Shampoo Sachet, will be sent free for 3d. stamps for postage and packing.

ICILMA CO., LTD.,
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of sending Christmas cards, this dainty Calendar for 1910 makes a welcome change. Solid Silver Cover, Engraved with any single INITIAL. Size 5in. by 1½in.

Post Free 1/- Anywhere.

THE MIDG CLOCK

This is not a toy, but a fully guaranteed Clock which will keep Perfect Time. If not, send it back at our expense. Sold as an advertisement at

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Diameter 2½ in. Foreign Postage Extra.



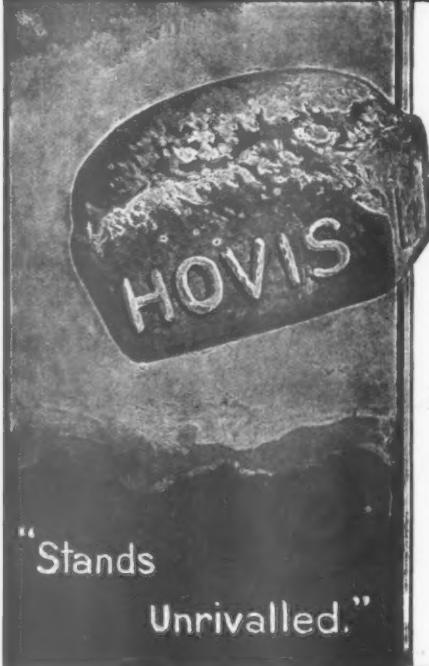
THIS PRETTY CLOCK

in China Stand with Coloured Flower Design. **Guaranteed Movement.** Size 5½ in. by 4 in. **Post Free Great Britain 2/11.** For Hundreds of other Novelties write for a **BRIGHT GIFT BOOK.** It will be sent post free.

BRIGHT'S STORES,
41, Bright Buildings, Bournemouth.

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A REPUTATION OF 50 YEARS is sufficient evidence of the extraordinary efficacy of HAROLD'S BROMPTON CONSUMPTION & COUGH SPECIFIC & LUNG SAVER. When all other remedies fail—try ours. Recommended by Medical Specialists and supplied to the aristocracy. 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 2d. of all chemists and Boots' stores, or post free from G. HAROLD, Dept. Q., 45, Waterloo Road, S.E. 1.



The Tale of HOVIS

(Trade Mark)

C. The best the soil gives is wheat, the best wheat—the pick of the World's wheat-fields—makes Hovis Bread, and Hovis Bread gives energy, strength, and nourishment.

C. This is the tale of Hovis.

For full particulars apply
The HOVIS-BREAD FLOUR CO. Ltd., Macclesfield.

THE WORLD'S HEADQUARTERS CURING ILLNESS WITHOUT MEDICINE



An important opportunity for British, Colonial, and Foreign Readers to investigate, without any cost to themselves, the Sandow Natural Method of curing illness, so that they may judge whether it provides the remedy necessary to Perfect Health in their own cases.

IT is doubtful if there is a single spot on the face of the globe, the tiniest hamlet equally with the vastest city, where the name of Eugen Sandow is unknown, and where the benefits of his wonderful system of Curative Physical Culture have not been heard of. If there be, and if there are any readers of THE QUIVER who are ignorant of Mr. Sandow's triumph in curing illness without medicine, and his method of accomplishing it, the opportunity is now afforded whereby this state of affairs can be remedied.

It has long been recognised that there are a number of complaints afflicting mankind on which ordinary medicinal treatment has in many instances no permanent effects, such as, for example, chest complaints, digestive troubles, uric acid complications, weakness of the heart's action, and circulatory disorders, as well as the hundred and one ailments which arise from nervous weakness and breakdown.

Where, however, ordinary methods fail to effect relief, Mr.

Sandow's treatment by scientific exercise results in a cure in ninety-nine out of every hundred cases.

That a sufferer cannot come to London to consult Mr. Sandow personally matters not, for through the medium of his Illustrated Health Library of twenty-four little volumes, which are specified below, Mr. Sandow has put his knowledge and his services at the command of each and every person who may feel desirous of taking advantage of them, no matter whether he or she be a mile or five thousand miles away.

Each of these volumes deals with a specific ailment, and explains the Sandow method of the natural cure for the complaint dealt with.

All that is necessary is to select the volume upon your principal weakness or ailment, and fill in the form below, when you will receive, without charge and post free, a copy of the booklet and a personal letter from Mr. Sandow giving his opinion upon the suitability of your own case for treatment by his natural drugless method.

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"The Quiver" Application Form.

A letter upon your ordinary notepaper will do as well, or for convenience this form may be used.

Please send me Vol. "Sandow's Health Library." Have suffered from.....

My age is..... since..... My occupation is.....

(Please say whether Mr., Mrs., Miss, Rev., or Title.)

Address.....

Here state any further details which you think necessary for Mr. Sandow to know, in order that he may form an opinion upon the suitability of your case for physical culture treatment.

To EUGEN SANDOW, 32, St. James's Street, London, England.

A Fine Feast of Fiction for Fourpence!

THE DECEMBER **4^d Net.**

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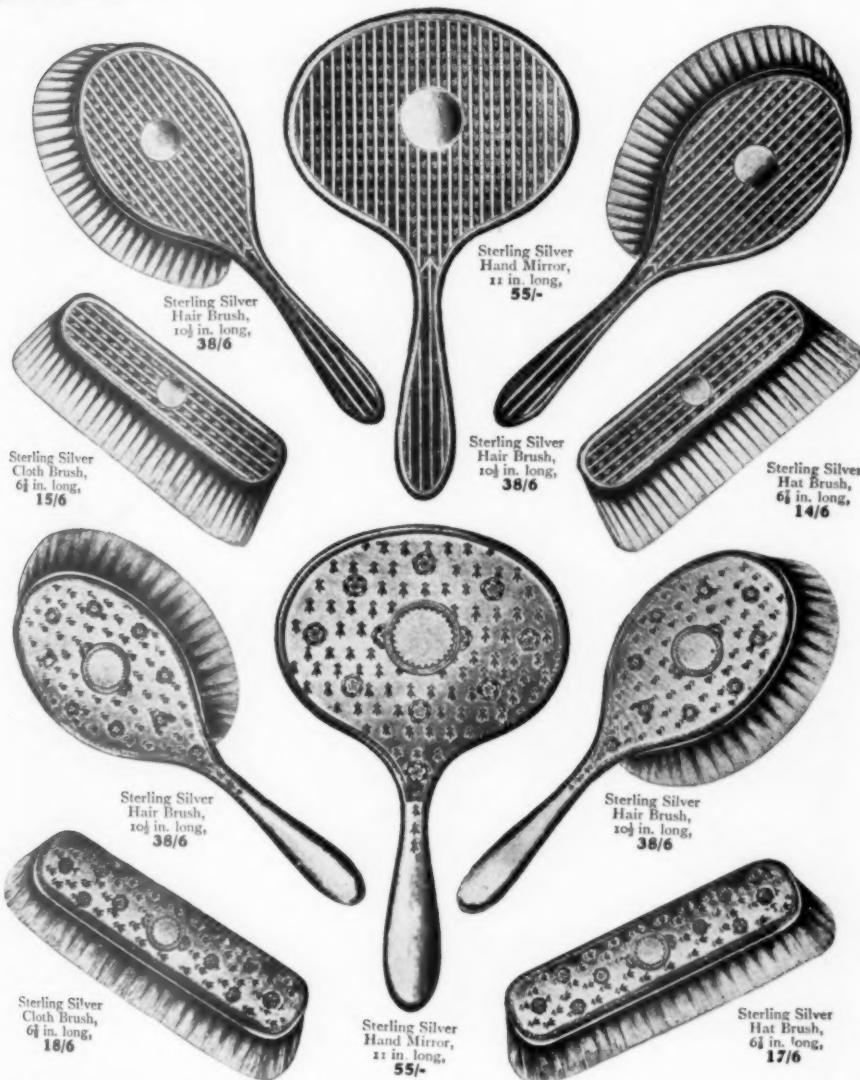
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PUZZLING HALF THE WITS IN ENGLAND

Our splendid
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the best value ever offered. They contain a host
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CAUTION! Beware—of Imitations.
There's only ONE
'WINCARNIS'
THE WORLD'S GREATEST LUNG TONIC.
NATURE'S FINEST RESTORATIVE



The gigantic success that "Wincarnis" has met with throughout the civilised world, achieved by the real merits of this splendid preparation, with the persistent recommendations of thousands of the medical profession, has led to unscrupulous tradesmen substituting worthless imitations. For your good health's sake **REFUSE THEM**. Health is too precious to experiment with unknown quantities. Therefore, when you ask for "Wincarnis" see that you get it, and if a dealer tries to sell you a substitute—as "Just as good"—go elsewhere. There are thousands of honest traders who will only be too glad to supply "Wincarnis," because experience has taught them that there is nothing in the world to equal it, and that it does all that is claimed for it.

Gold Medal Franco-British Exhibition,
London, 1908. By special appointment
to the King and Queen of Spain.

NOW IS THE TIME to recuperate health and strength. If you send three penny stamps to cover carriage you will receive a trial bottle free—large enough to do you good and enable you to appreciate its wonderful properties. Then you can buy "Wincarnis" from your wine merchant, licensed grocer, or chemist. It is also sold by the glass and in 1/- flasks at hotels, licensed houses, and railway refreshment bars.

TRIAL BOTTLE GRATIS

To COLEMAN & CO., Ltd., 215, Wincarnis Works, Norwich.
Please send me a free trial bottle of Wincarnis. I enclose 3d. for carriage.

Name
QUIVER, Dec., 1909. Address

NOTE.—"Wincarnis" is now sold by all chemists in France.

"WINCARNIS" PREVENTS COLDS, CHILLS, & INFLUENZA.

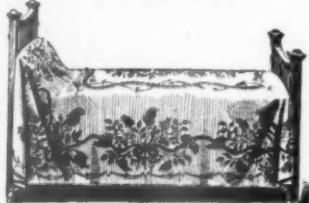
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OF PURCHASES MADE DURING
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Bedspreads

"The Lilac," single bed size, as illustrated, Red and White, Green and White, Blue and White, or Heliotrope and White.

3/11 each. Worth 5/6.
Post Free 4d. each extra.



Heavily Silver-plated Full-size Entree Dish, fitted with handsome Gadroon mounts and handle to unlock, 25/- Usual price, 4/-



AXMINSTER PILE CARPETS

With Borders 2/11 per yard
Without Borders 2/9 "

To clear odd lengths 2/6 "
U usual price, 4/-

All Carpets made up free.



Elegant Silver-plated Queen Anne Design Teapot, full size, 12/11;
Sugar Basin, 6/6; Cream Jug, 4/11; Set complete, 24/-



SEE ALSO SEE THE DEAF AND

DISPENSARY FROM EASY EYES AND EARS FROM

INFLUENZA AND CATARRH. SPECIAL REMEDIES

FORWARDED. HUNDREDS OF LETTERS IN TESTI-

MONY. NO PAINFUL INSTRUMENTS. WRITE

FOR TESTIMONIALS AND PRINTED QUESTIONS

TO ANSWER, SENT FREE. MR. T. IRON, IRON'S EYE AND EAR DISPENSARY,

LTD., GREAT GEORGE ST., LEEDS. (ESTABL. 1871.)

EYES AND EARS

New Treatment Without Operation.

For all Diseases of the Eye; Deafness in all its forms; Noise in Head and Ear; Disease from Ease of Deafness from Influenza and Catarrh. Special remedies forwarded. Hundreds of letters in testimony. No painful instruments. Write for Testimonials and Printed Questions to answer, sent free. Mr. T. IRON, Iron's Eye and Ear Dispensary, Ltd., Great George St., Leeds. (Estab. 1871.)

LADIES are invited to send Post Card for free copy of the Handbook of the **AUTHENTIC NEW STYLES**

in Corsets and Gowns for the coming Season, including the "Certified Correct Models in Royal Worcester" and "Bon Ton" Kid-Fitting Corsets.

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EVERY LADY has the **RIGHT TO KNOW**

the secret of the approaching fashion in order to provide herself with the correct corset foundation.

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In Paste & Liquid
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"KOH-I-NOOR"
PENCILS

Here
Is a Solution

of at least one of your Christmas Giving Problems. Visit your stationer and inspect the variety of neat, inexpensive "Koh-I-Noor" Pocket Propelling Pencils he is able to show. If the gift is intended for an artist, then a box of Koh-I-Noor would be most useful and acceptable.

Mark to 17 DEGREES.

Koh-I-Noor Pencils are 4d. each or 3/6 per dozen. Of stationers, etc. - L. & C. Hardtmuth, 12, Golden Lane, London, E.C. (Paris, Vienna, Dresden, Milan, Brussels, New York.)

Have It Hot—Have It Cold

That is the lifelong work of every THERMOS FLASK.
To keep Liquids HOT or COLD—as you like—for
24 hours.

And to do it regardless of climate—sun or snow.

Here at home in winter a THERMOS means hot drinks or hot water any-time without fire, lamp, or stove.

In the torrid zones or on a scorching summer day—it means cold drinks whenever they are wanted. The

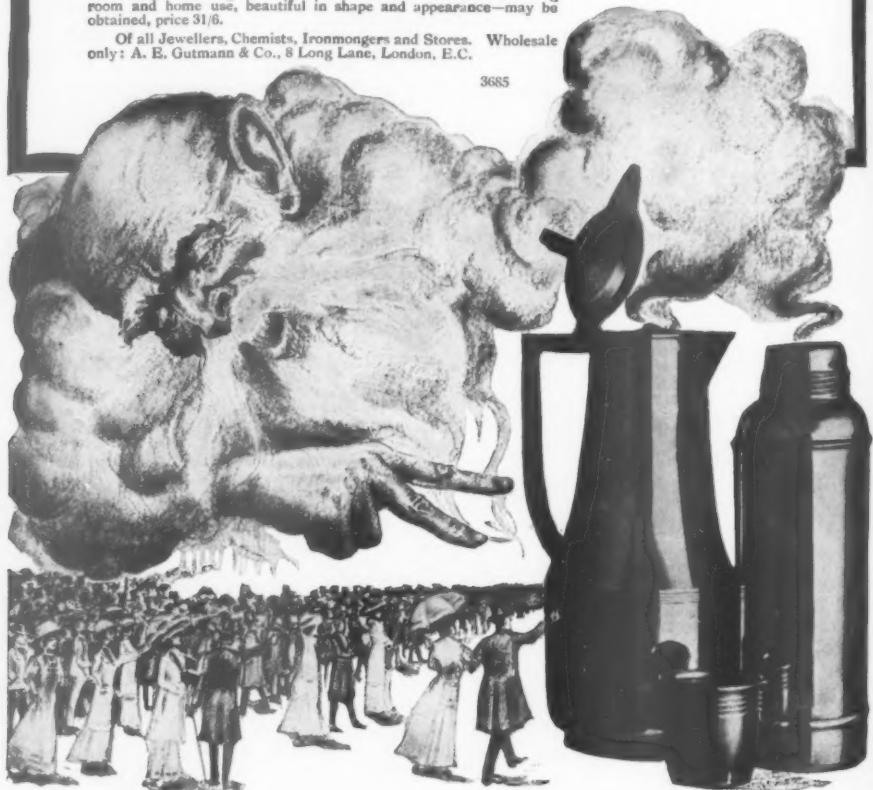
Thermos Flask

makes a MAGNIFICENT XMAS PRESENT to suit everybody. Two new patterns from 10/6. Other patterns as before, 21/- to 10 guineas.

The Thermos Jug—an adaptation of the Thermos Flask—for dining room and home use, beautiful in shape and appearance—may be obtained, price 31/6.

Of all Jewellers, Chemists, Ironmongers and Stores. Wholesale only: A. E. Gutmann & Co., 8 Long Lane, London, E.C.

3685



NEW 8-HOUR CURE FOR CATARRH, NOSE-BREATHING DIFFICULTIES, ADENOIDS, POLYPI, ASTHMATIC, BRONCHIAL, & CONSUMPTIVE TENDENCIES.

Send for this Gift Book by Patient and His Doctor, who Jointly Discovered a Remarkable 8-Hour Cure which Re-Opens Nasal Air Passages and Quickly Banishes Catarrhal Conditions of Nose, Head, Ears, Throat, Tongue, Tonsils, Breath, and Bronchial Tubes.

NO OPERATIONS—NO CAUTERISING—NO SPRAYS—NEW CURE AUTOMATICALLY CURES DURING SLEEP

It is the hearty desire of the discoverers of the new cure that all who suffer from the above complaints should write or call for a gratis copy of the book they have just published under the title of "Respiratory Re-Education : The Physiological Cure for Catarrh, Nose-Breathing Difficulties, Adenoids, Polypi, Asthmatic, Bronchial and Consumptive Tendencies."



There is no fuss or bother with the new cure for catarrh and nose-breathing difficulties, weak chest and lungs, asthmatic and bronchial tendencies. The cure remains in operation during the whole of the night, and no conscious effort is called for.

generally had to be operated

The falling back down the throat, or on to the back of the tongue, of the poisonous, evil-smelling, slimy, mucous matter causes offensive breath, a bad taste in the mouth, a poor appetite, and also actually poisons the food taken into the mouth.

The hearing becomes affected, the head feels hot, and the eyes dry, with reactionary spells of acid watery discharge from eyes and nose, especially in changeable weather.

The senses of smell and taste become seriously impaired.

Even the mouth-breathing is handicapped by the accumulation of catarrhal matter in the bronchial tubes and lungs.

Further, the pent-up catarrhal slime often gets into the stomach, the liver, kidneys, and bladder, seriously interfering with their functional ability, and frequently giving rise to catarrh of the stomach.

The joint authors of the discovery—as the result of a fruitless quest for relief and cure—were led to an experiment along the line of "the First Cause"—the nose and its respiratory functions.

The layman it was who made the first enlightening discovery. A singer, he discovered *HOW the nose could be freed*. (See explanation in free book.)

Immediately the method of cure described by the book is applied, there is striking evidence of its curative powers. It is, as one may put it, like coming into the

The new cure quickly relieves, and in Nature's good time cures, because it increases the individual's air supply. First, it re-opens

and expands the partly-closed air passages and cavities. Thus it prepares the way for the intake of the larger supply of air absolutely necessary to catarrhal freedom. Thus, your breathing function is perfected; thus, too, does the 10 to 40 per cent. enlarged air-capacity of your body insure the elimination of the catarrhal secretions.

And it is this greatly increased inflow of fresh and properly filtered, warmed, and moistened air that is so powerful to cure catarrh, adenoids, and other nose-breathing difficulties. Inflowing with all the 15 lb. to the square inch pressure of the outside atmosphere, the closed-in—because more or less disengaged—nasal air passages and cavities expand to their natural size and air-supplying capacity.

Undoubtedly a most powerful factor in the success of the new cure is the fact that it may be employed during the whole of the night without discomfort or any inconvenience. This all-night period of treatment contrasts strongly with the mere two or three minutes of treatment with the now obsolete spraying methods.

Lennox Browne, F.R.S.E., Senior Surgeon to the Central London Throat and Ear Hospital, etc., says :

"Opinion is each day becoming more indisputable that in the condition of the nasal fossa, which constitute the first avenues of the natural breathway, is to be found the key to the right understanding and successful treatment of the majority of faecal, pharyngeal, and laryngeal diseases."

The success of the new treatment is immediately obvious to all who try it.

In one night the nose, ears, tongue, and throat give every evidence of the good work of the cure.

In one week the nose and mouth both cease to discharge catarrhal matter. The brain, eyes, and ears feel clear, the mouth and throat clean and sweet, and the taste and smell become as keen as ever.

The book explanatory of the new cure contains some most remarkable illustrations, which help to make strikingly clear the common-sense principle upon which the new cure is founded.

The aim of the compilers of the book has been to thoroughly inform sufferers as to the cause and method of cure of their complaint. All who study the book will readily agree with this. As will be seen in the book, the method of the new cure is as delightfully simple as it is effective in its results.

An edition of 100,000 copies of the book has been published for free distribution, and all who wish to quickly cure Catarrh, Adenoids, Polypi, or other Nose-breathing Troubles, or Catarrhal Deafness, Colds, Tongue, Bad Breath, Swollen Tonsils, Chest and Lung Weakness, or Asthmatic, Bronchial or Consumptive Tendencies, should send or call for a copy. A penny stamp should be sent to defray postage. The address from which the free copies of the book may be obtained is: The Publishers, "Respiratory Re-Education," 91, Ryehill Building, 130, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

The book contains many illustrations showing how the nasal air-passages are altered in catarrh, adenoids, and nose-breathing difficulties.

Immediately the method of cure described by the book is applied, there is striking evidence of its curative powers. It is, as one may put it, like coming into the

The new cure quickly relieves, and in Nature's good time cures, because it increases the individual's air supply. First, it re-opens

The cleanest Boots on a dirty day

are the boots where Wood Milne Shoe Shines have been at work. It's a shine that *lasts* — it doesn't die in an hour but lives for days. When it does grow dull you revive it with a rub.

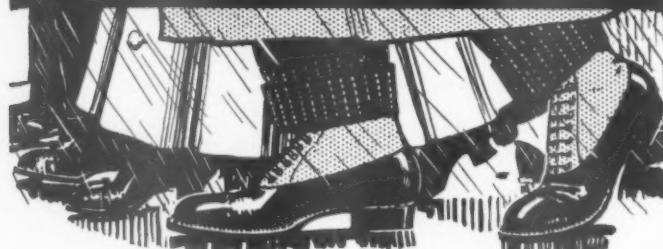
Mud doesn't stick — rain doesn't penetrate — fog doesn't dim the shoes that shine with —

WOOD MILNE SHOE SHINES

As much for 3d. as you get of other polishes for 4½d.
— and better for 3d. than you can buy at *any* price.

■ One tin — of either Black or Brown — proves it ■

Ask your Bootseller for a tin of Wood Milne Shoe Shine to-day



**OLD
ARTIFICIAL
TEETH BOUGHT.**

The well-known London Manufacturing Dentists, Messrs. BROWNING, give the very best value; if forwarded by post, utmost value per return, or offer made, 63, Oxford Street (opposite Rathbone Place), London, W. *Est. 100 Years.*

NO LANCING OR CUTTING

Required if you use the world-renowned **BURGESS' LION OINTMENT**. It has saved many a limb from the knife. Cured others after being given up by Hospital. The BEST REMEDY for WOUNDS and all SKIN DISEASES. A CERTAIN CURE for CICHERS, CHILBLAINS, CHRONIC DISEASES, ECZEMA, &c. Thousands of Testimonials from all P.O. Proprietor, E. BURGESS, 86, Gray's Inn Road, London. Advice gratis.



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with a beautiful Engraving from the magnificent painting by B. W. LEADER, R.A., on plate paper, measuring 16 by 12 inches, provided this advertisement and four penny stamps are enclosed to cover cost of packing and carriage (foreign stamp value 8d. accepted from abroad); or if called for, no charge will be made. Address, The Secretary, Fine Art Galleries, 63, Baker Street, London, W. *N.B.* — This liberal offer is made solely to introduce our Catalogue of Engravings, etc.



PEPS
"A PINE-FOREST
IN EVERY HOME."

In the home where Peps are kept handy, coughs, colds, sore throat, and bronchitis are robbed of their terrors. During damp and cold winter months coughs and colds are especially prevalent. Therefore, children and the older folks need Peps as a safeguard against epidemics of colds and influenza, which often "run through a house." Peps—the medicine you breathe direct into the lungs—are the sure cure for all throat and chest ailments, and are guaranteed free from the opium, laudanum, etc., found in cough-mixtures and cheap lozenges.

**for COUGHS, COLDS
& BRONCHITIS.**

CHILPRUFE

FOR CHILDREN

The Editor of "F.F.A.C." writes: "CHILPRUFE is the softest, cosiest 'Woolie' invented for children's wear. We very strongly recommend this **SOOL** under-garments. Of leading **Drapers**, or write for nearest agents."

"CHILPRUFE" MILLS (DEPT. F.D.) LEICESTER.

See Registered TRADE MARK—"Baby's Clothes will now fit Dolly."

IMPROVED LIFE-SIZE DOLL.

Free Gift of Two 9-in. Dolls with all orders received mentioning this paper.

1/6 POST FREE.

This **Life-Size Doll** is this century's model of the old-fashioned Rag Doll that grandmas used to make, and would make grandmas open her eyes in wonder. The Doll is an exact reproduction in fast colours of a hand-painted French creation, printed on extra soft cotton fabric. The Doll is to be stuffed. Dolly is printed with fair hair, rosy cheeks, brown eyes, kid coloured body, red stockings, black shoes, and will stand alone when made up in one of the two grown dresses that her little daughter can put on and off, button and unbutton to her heart's desire, the **Life-Size Doll** will live in that child's memory long after childhood's days are past. Life-Size Doll and two 9-in. Dolls sent post free on receipt of P.O. for **1/6**. Orders for the Colonies 6d. extra. 2½-in. Doll and one 9-in. Doll, 1s. Full-Size Sample Shy-Nall Fabric, 6d. post free.

SHY-NALL CHEMICAL CO., (Dept. 60 N., 75, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.)

How are you ?

. Have you had your
MOLASSINE DOG CAKE?

They are suitable for
ALL KINDS OF DOGS AND PUPPIES.

NO FANCY PREPARATIONS BEING NECESSARY.

These Foods are composed of the purest ingredients only. Their unique effects are due to the antiseptic properties of the foods of which the cakes are compounded. They aid digestion, keep dogs' skins and coats in fine condition, eradicate internal worms and parasites and prevent the dogs smelling.

ABSOLUTELY DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER CAKES.

Sold by Grocers, Corn Merchants and
THE MOLASSINE CO., LTD.,
Dog and Puppy Cake Works,
109, TUNNEL AVENUE, GREENWICH, S.E.

In districts where these Cakes are not stocked by Dealers we pay carriage to Customers on quantities of 25 lb. and upwards.

SEND FOR SAMPLES.

"MOLASSINE MEAL GIVES HORSES STAMINA."

Epilepsy or Falling Sickness

THE TRUE STORY OF A CURE

By JOHN WESTLOCK

"YOU should give that story to the world," said I. "It would strike home, Mr. Nicholl, and for every one person who now reads your plain little advertisement a dozen would read your true story."

"After all these years of quiet progression," objected Mr. Nicholl, "I am only half inclined to change my methods. Ozerine sells mostly by recommendation of one patient to another; it has made its own name, and the publicity of the Press has had comparatively little to do with its success as a medicine. Still, if what you say is correct—if people reading the Ozerine Story would be compelled to believe that it was actually true, then the result—"

"Would be hope and new life for many who are now hopeless," I suggested firmly.

And that settled it.

THE OZERINE STORY.

"It is twenty years since I first began making up this medicine," said Mr. Nicholl. "It was not put up for general sale in the first place, but just for a private customer. He came regularly with his prescription for a matter of two years, and we got to know each other pretty well by that time, though my customer always kept his own counsel and never volunteered any information as to what illness the medicine was intended to cure.

"After this long time his visits suddenly ceased. For six months or more I saw nothing of him, and his face was gradually slipping from my memory when one day he reappeared in the shop and asked to see me alone. I brought him in here to my study, wondering what he could have to say, and was very much surprised when he pulled out his prescription—a faded and tattered bit of paper it was by this time—and held it up to the light.

"'You remember it?' he said. 'Did you ever wonder what it was intended to cure?'

"'Often,' said I. 'But then, you know, it wasn't my business to inquire. If asked, I should say it is a medicine for some affection of the nerves.'

"'No,' said he. 'You wouldn't call epileptic fits nervousness, would you? This is my physician's' (naming an exceedingly well-known London specialist) 'prescribed cure for epilepsy. I was the sufferer, and God knows I did suffer. No one who hasn't come through it, or had someone belonging to him come through it, knows just what epilepsy means to the person afflicted. This medicine entirely cured me—entirely, you understand; not half and half; and I have come to see that it is not right to keep a prescription in my pocket that might be the means of helping hundreds of poor sufferers in the same way that it helped me. Why, if it didn't cure everybody it couldn't miss curing some; for mine was an ordinary bad case, and typical of thousands of other bad cases.'

"He was very much in earnest, and his earnestness so affected me that I subsequently did exactly what he proposed, and put the medicine on the market, making it known in quiet ways—for advertising wasn't then what it is now—and letting it build up its own reputation. That is the begin-

ning of the Ozerine Story. Is there, after all, to much in it to make a sufferer, who has perhaps often been led away by other stories, feel that it is true?"

"You raise a false point," said I. "The true tale of your medicine begins where you leave off. There is no room in this world for a one-man's remedy. Why not repeat what you told me half an hour ago—the tale of what Ozerine has done since you sent it out broadcast to do good wherever opportunity came in its way? You have never issued a line of sensational advertisement—have scarcely gone the length of publishing a few testimonials out of all these thousands that you have been showing me. Why don't you give people who are suffering from epilepsy a fair chance of hearing about your remedy? Why trust so completely to the 'recommendation' of one customer to another? These letters, for instance, how gladly the writers would speak for you—not to ones or twos, but to thousands if they had the opportunity. Take just a line or two from a few of them, and add it to my true story."

"A Scotswoman doesn't write like this unless she believes in a thing":—

"Ozerine seems to me to be the best medicine on earth, and I will praise it wherever I go. For five years my mother was afraid to leave me one minute alone, but from the first dose I took of Ozerine I have been a new woman. Now I want to help a young girl, a stranger, aged nineteen, who has begun to take the same sort of fits. Will you let her have a sample bottle as soon as you can, and I hope it will be the Godsend to her that it has been to me."

And this is from a working man:—

"Ozerine is doing me a lot of good. It is twelve months since I started this wonderful remedy, and I have not had the slightest sign of a fit since."

This, again, from a London smith and farrier:—

"I was in danger of my life, working among horses, and always subject to fits. Now I carry on my work from six to six, and sometimes from six to ten, and have no fear. Ozerine has cured me, and I will recommend it to all the sufferers I hear of."

This from a mother:—

"My daughter has been taking Ozerine for nearly six months, and not one sign of a fit since the first dose. She was having fits nearly every week before she began with this medicine."

From another mother:—

"My son, now 46 years old, was constantly subject to fits from the time he was three, but I can surely say he has not had the slightest fit since he began taking your wonderful medicine."

Such, then, is the general run of the letters now being received by every post. Each one adds a confident line to this true story of what can be done, under ordinary circumstances, for the sufferer from epileptic fits.

Ozerine is sent to all parts of the world, post free in U. K. for 4s. 6d. and 11s. per bottle. Special rates for the Colonies, America, and foreign countries. Also, any sufferer applying for a Free Sample Bottle will be gladly supplied by the proprietor, Mr. J. W. Nicholl, Pharmaceutical Chemist, 27, High Street, Belfast.

TO SUFFERERS FROM SKIN AND BLOOD DISEASES.

The specialists will tell you that all such complaints as

ECZEMA,
SCROFULA,
SCURVY,
BAD LEGS,

ULCERS,
TUMOURS,
ABSCESSES, [INGS,
GLANDULAR SWELL-

BOILS,
PIMPLES,
BLOOD POISON,
SORES,

ERUPTIONS,
PILES,
RHEUMATISM,
GOUT, &c.,

are entirely due to a diseased state of the blood, and can only be permanently cured by thoroughly purifying the blood. For cleansing the blood of all impurities, from whatever cause arising, there is no other medicine just as good as "Clarke's Blood Mixture"; that's why in thousands of cases it has effected truly marvellous cures where all other treatments have failed. (Two recent cases are given below.) Start taking Clarke's Blood Mixture to-day, and you will soon have the same experience.

"Clarke's Blood Mixture is entirely free from any poison or metallic impregnation, does not contain any injurious ingredient, and is a good, safe, and useful medicine."—HEALTH.

Of all Chemists and Stores, 2/9 per bottle, and in cases containing six times the quantity 11s., or post free on receipt of price, direct from the Proprietors, the Lincoln and Midland Counties Drug Co., Lincoln.

Clarke's Blood Mixture

PROOF.

DEAR SIRS.—For months my wife and myself suffered with irritant eczema. We spent a considerable amount in medicines and ointments, but got no relief. We then decided to try Clarke's Blood Mixture, and I am happy to say we are completely cured after taking two of the 11s. bottles.—(Signed) F. O'HARA, 30, Avarn Road, Tooting, London, S.W.

THE WORLD-FAMED

REMEDY FOR

Eczema, Scrofula, Bad Legs, Ulcers, Tumours, Abscesses, Glandular Swellings, Pimples, Boils, Sores, and Eruptions of all kinds, Piles, Blood Poison, Rheumatism, Gout, &c.

PROOF.

DEAR SIRS.—For seven years I suffered with an ulcerated leg. I was attended to at hospital, and by two doctors, but nothing seemed to do me any good. I then thought I would try Clarke's Blood Mixture, and I am very thankful to inform you I am quite cured.—(Signed) Mrs. L. ABBOTT, 181, Tilbury Dwellings, Tilbury, Essex.

**HAS CURED THOUSANDS.
WILL CURE YOU.**

£20,000

in

FREE GIFTS.

THIS FOUNTAIN PEN

fitted with 14 carat Gold Nib, Iridium tipped, twin feed, richly chased case, screw section, English made and worth 7/6, is given to all customers purchasing **One Quart Bottle of Ink, at the Ordinary Price, 3/-**



Messrs. MORRELL, Ltd.,
the well-known manufacturers of Inks and Gums, have decided upon a novel method of advertising.

Messrs. Morrell have been established 150 years, and

Morrell's Inks and Gums
have a world-wide reputation.

They have been awarded many Prizes, Medals, and Diplomas, and are used in Government Offices.

Instead of spending huge sums in advertising on enamel plates, in newspapers, etc., they intend spending £20,000 by means of

FREE GIFTS TO THEIR CUSTOMERS.

They are induced to do this because they know their best advertisement is the quality of their goods and that every new customer induced to purchase their Inks by means of these Free Gifts will be an assured regular customer afterwards. In this manner they hope, whilst benefiting their customers, to handsomely recoup themselves by increased sales.

3/- BOTTLE of INK for

7/6 FOUNTAIN PEN } **3/- or**

10/6 for 3/-

For 3/-

One 1/- Bottle of Blue Black Writing Ink.

One 1/- Bottle of Copying or Coloured Ink.

One 1/- Bottle of Paste or Gum.

One 7/6 Gold Nib Fountain Pen.

10/6 for 3/-

SOLD BY ANY STATIONER.

If unable to obtain
send P.O. 3/- direct to Works:

2, COOKS ROAD, STRATFORD, LONDON, E.

ORDINARY PRICE of the Ink, 3/- We give you the Fountain Pen.

**FREE
TO
YOU.**



**INVALID CHILDREN'S AID
ASSOCIATION (London), Incorporated**

60, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road,
Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

The Secretary Appeals most urgently for new **SUBSCRIBERS** and **DONORS**, to enable her to assist the large number of new children daily referred to the Association, whose needs cannot be met without additional support.

**NUMBER OF CASES ON BOOKS, 17,850.
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE, £5,820.**

Full details will be given on application to the Secretary at above address.

WHY RUN FURTHER RISKS?

When you can secure the best protection against Fire by installing

“KYL-FYRE,” Fire Extinguisher.

The EXPENDITURE of a FEW SHILLINGS may SAVE you THOUSANDS OF POUNDS.
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RAGGED SCHOOLS & REFUGES.

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London City Mission,

3, Bridewell Place, London, E.C.

A Report will be gladly forwarded upon application.

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Whose joys at last Xmas were wretchedly FEW.

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Orphan and Destitute Children in



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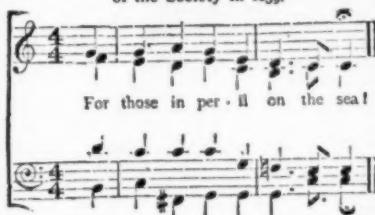
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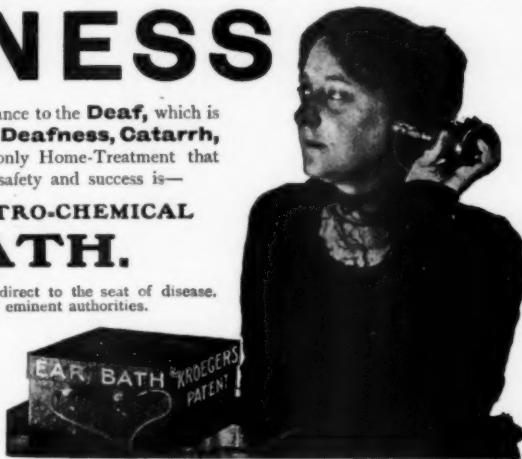
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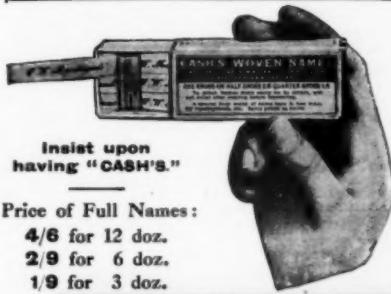
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THE QUIVER

CONTENTS FOR DECEMBER, 1909

Frontispiece: "The Christmas Mail on Board a Man-of-War."	By C. M. PADDAY
Weather Permitting. Complete Story. By ADA CAMBRIDGE	95
The Truce of Christmas. By BASIL MATHEWS, M.A.	103
A Living Death. Complete Story. By HAROLD BEGBIE.	110
The Festival of the Heart. By THE LORD BISHOP OF RIPON	117
LOVE'S BARRIER. Serial Story. By ANNIE S. SWAN. Chaps. IV.—V.	123
The Peace Child. Complete Story. By LILLIAS CAMPBELL DAVIDSON.	134
The Policeman as Philanthropist. By ERNEST H. RANN	141
A Son of Renown. Complete Story. By OSWALD WILDRIDGE	149
Is the World Growing Better? An Emphatic "Yes." By the REV. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.	156
A Scent of Sweet Lavender. Complete Story. By FLORENCE BONE.	160
In Childland. By HERBERT D. WILLIAMS	169
"Forgive us our Trespasses." Complete Story. By MONTAGUE HERBERT	174
Letters on Life and Love. By "AMICA." No. 2.—To a Man who Regrets his Matrimonial Engagement	180
Beside the Still Waters	183
Dick Smiley's Love Letter. Complete Story. By A. B. COOPER	186
HOME DEPARTMENT:—	
Christmas Fare. By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR	190
Some Household Hints. <i>With Photographic Illustrations</i>	192
Conversation Corner. By THE EDITOR	194
DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING. Long Complete Story. By ETHEL F. HEDDLE. <i>Illustrated by Fred Pogram</i>	196
BOYS' AND GIRLS' OWN CHRISTMAS PAGES:—	
Santa Claus' Mistake. By MARGARET BATCHELOR	223
How we Got our Christmas Tree. By HAROLD MURRAY	225
The Christmas Bells. By the REV. J. G. STEVENSON	227
The Story of Robin Redbreast. By EMILY HUNTLEY	228
"How, When and Where Corner." By "ALISON"	230
Our Portrait Gallery	232
Sunday School Pages	233
The Crutch-and-Kindness League. By the REV. J. REID HOWATT	235

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Result of "Holiday Experiences" Competition.

THE Competition for "Holiday Experiences," announced in "Conversation Corner" for September, concluded on November 1st. The Editor begs to thank the readers who entered for this competition.

The prize of 10s. 6d. has been awarded to :

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Miss Helena Shewell, The Bank House, Hitchin. J. D. Williams, Glengarry, Kirtleton Avenue, Weymouth.

The following are highly commended : Miss A. F. Atkins, Mrs. V. M. Cattermole, J. Holmes, Miss Nellie Kirkham, Miss Eleanor Martin, Miss L. M. Le Messurier, Miss Rose M. Molesworth, Fred Parry, Miss Blanche Thompson, R. H. Towler, Miss Agnes Curwen Woodley.

"THE QUIVER" FUNDS.

THE following is a list of contributions received up to and including October 30th, 1900. Subscriptions received after this date will be acknowledged next month :

For *The Quiver Waifs Fund*: From Readers of "The Christian," £2.

For *The Mission to Lepers*: An Old Ramsey Reader,

For *Dr. Barnardo's Homes*: Bradford, 4s.

Sent direct to *Dr. Barnardo's Homes*: M. O. B., A. M. B., 5s.—Total, £1.

THE LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS

THE following are the sums received from old and new members up to and including October 30th, 1900 :

2s. 6d. each from Herbert D. Ryrie, E. Moore.

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LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

CALENDAR

DECEMBER, 1909

1 WED. Queen Alexandra b. 1844	17 FRI. Lord Kelvin d. 1907
2 THURS. First service in St. Paul's 1607	18 SAT. Slavery abolished U.S.A. 1862
3 FRI. Archbishop Tait d. 1882	19 SUNDAY 4th in Advent
4 SAT. Carlyle b. 1795	20 MON. St. Ignatius
5 SUNDAY 2nd in Advent	21 TUES. Michaelmas Law Sittings end
6 MON. St. Nicholas	22 WED. First wireless message across Atlantic 1902
7 TUES. Dean Kitchin b. 1827	23 THURS. Sir R. Arkwright b. 1732
8 WED. Richard Baxter d. 1691	24 FRI. Thackeray d. 1863
9 THURS. Milton b. 1608	25 SAT. Christmas Day
10 FRI. Fall of Plevna 1877	26 SUNDAY 1st after Christmas
11 SAT. Battle of Magersfontein 1890	27 MON. Charles Lamb d. 1834
12 SUNDAY 3rd in Advent	28 TUES. Lord Macaulay d. 1859
13 MON. Dean Stanley b. 1813	29 WED. Gladstone b. 1809
14 TUES. Prince Albert of Wales b. 1805	30 THURS. (29) Carmen Sylva b. 1843
15 WED. Charles Cowden Clarke b. 1787	31 FRI. Wycliffe d. 1384
16 THURS. Jane Austen b. 1775	



THE CHRISTMAS MAIL ON BOARD A MAN-OF-WAR.
(Drawn by C. M. Padday.)



VOL. XLV., NO. 2

DECEMBER, 1909

Weather Permitting

The Story of an Outdoor Christmas

By ADA CAMBRIDGE

WHEN Ned Amory planned with such enthusiasm the memorable summer camp, he did not know that Christmas, with the few weeks immediately following, was to break all the records of the Melbourne Observatory—for that time of year—in the matter of extraordinary temperatures and rainfall. He anticipated a new Arcadia and Garden of Eden in one, golden sunshine tempered by greenwood shade, picnic meals under the plumy tree-ferns by the tinkling waterfalls, balmy moonlit nights when it would seem wasting life and bliss to sleep—a pair of forest lovers so romantically exalted by their sylvan environment as to forget that they walked in mortal flesh.

His mother, in the futile mother's way, did attempt to moderate his sanguine hopes a little.

"Give me my own comfortable rooms and the ice-chest in midsummer," said she, "and wire blinds for the mosquitoes and blow-flies. Besides, my dear, you may take a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink—especially if you push his head down by main force."

To which her son replied that the summers had been cool for years; that the mountains were cooler than the city, anyhow; that, if it came really hot, you were hot everywhere, but particularly within rooms whose brick walls had got baked through; that mosquitoes were not born

of running streams, and that Kate had made a ripping meat-safe of net and fencing wire, as well as a stunning butter-cooler of a tin billy and sailcloth. As for that allusion to the horse—typifying Kate's sister, Lilian Steele—it was the belief of the young man that no animal of exceptional taste and intelligence, such as he knew this one to be, could resist the nectars that Nature brewed in her haunts of beauty for the stimulation of poetic sentiment to its active manifestations.

"All right, dear boy, do just as you like," said Mrs. Amory, "so long as you don't ask me to join you. And," she added, "if you think it worth while to run after a girl who simply treats you as a doormat, why—I don't. But," she added further, in haste, "you know your own business best, dearest, and as long as you are pleased I'm happy."

His only answer to this was to accept her proffered kiss. He was quite of the opinion that he knew his own business best, and had never dreamed of asking her—with her views—to join the camping party.

Its composition had been a matter of much thought and subtle diplomacy. First, of course, Morton and Kate—devoted supporters and co-originators of the scheme—and Lilian; then his friends, Percy Wilbraham and Connie Sargent—asked because they were engaged to each other,

THE QUIVER

and for several contingent reasons ; finally, Uncle John Amory and Aunt Susan—the former, a very good-natured and easy-going old man, accustomed to bush ways, providing the hooded waggon, buckets, axe, and what not ; the latter, a notable cook and stocking-knitter, who had given the turkey and plum pudding, and other good things, and could be depended on to keep house cheerfully while the young folk roamed abroad. With himself, a party of eight persons, all told.

He thought he had masked carefully the main intention in the make-up ; but Lilian knew better. She quite understood the wherefore of an engaged couple ; of fatherly-looking Uncle John, whom a child could hoodwink ; of useful Aunt Susan, who liked nothing better than to drudge for other people and to see girls and boys enjoying themselves. But, in fact, Kate Amory had opened Lilian's eyes to the situation before ever it was created. With the admirable, but often unwise, candour of a sister, and with the enthusiasm of the happy matron for the married state, she had untimely disclosed her match-making tactics, not allowing for the proud spirit that will not brook dictation in these matters. She had simply thrown her brother-in-law—over-eager to be thrown—at Lilian's head ; and that was why Lilian treated him as a doormat, and had become as a horse that not only will not drink, but rebels with all its might against being brought to water.

"I am neither a wild gipsy nor a Bedouin of the desert," said she, "and tent-life does not appeal to me. You go, if you like that sort of thing, and I will keep house for you and take care of the children."

"The children are going to Aunt Lou to be taken care of," said Kate, "and there won't be a house to keep. It's to be shut up."

"Then I'll go to Aunt Lou, too."

"You can't. She's going to the seaside, and will have barely room in her lodgings for herself and them."

Kate had her sister at her mercy, for the latter, newly out from England, had as yet no friends in Australia beyond the family circle. She recognised also the ingratitude of perversity carried to extremes, since Kate had impressed on her that the expedition was organised mainly for her entertainment.

"Very well, dear," she acquiesced, per-

force. "I'll go, of course, if you wish it, and I dare say it will be very nice. Only let it be distinctly understood that I am not going to be either bounced or bamboozled into marrying Ned. I don't like him, and I won't have him, and you may tell him so if he wants to know."

"You can tell him yourself," returned Kate, with colour in her cheeks ; "but if you go and throw away the best chance a girl ever had of a good husband and a good home—to go on drudging as a lady companion till you are an old maid—why, you are more of a fool than I took you for."

"I don't mind being a lady companion," laughed Lilian. "if it is to a person I find companionable ; nor a fool, either, so long as I am not a husband hunter."

"Well, if you are going to spoil our party—"

"I am not, of course," and she kissed Mrs. Morton and mollified her. "I am going to be as good as gold, and do everything you want me to do—bar *that*."

On this ostensible understanding the sisters set forth with the rest of the campers for their lodge in the vast wilderness of the Healesville mountains—an enchanting spot in the heart of the tree-fern forest, with its "boundless contiguity of shade," near to a purling glass-clear brooklet, a musical cascade, and an idyllic bathing-pool—truly a nursery for young love hard to beat in anything like kindly weather.

Uncle John and Aunt Susan, whose farm lay handy, awaited the six young people from Melbourne at Healesville railway station, and there took on board their waggon the tents and other baggage of the party. They took on relays of passengers also, when clear of the town ; but, all the long way to their destination, the match-makers failed to manoeuvre Lilian into contact with Ned Amory. They were, nevertheless, a merry company.

Great was the excitement of pitching camp : young men and maids tent-building, with sleeves rolled up and perspiration trickling down ; Aunt Susan unpacking and arranging her choice provisions, aided by Kate with her patent safe and butter-cooler ; Uncle John wood-chopping as for a wager, and building the fire for the billy as only a bushman can.

Beautiful beyond words were the majestic forest aisles at that sunset hour, with the



"Great was the excitement of pitching camp. . . . Aunt Susan unpacking and arranging her choice provisions, aided by Kate with her patent safe and butter-cooler."

THE QUIVER

jackies just piping up and the bull-frog sounding his deep note as on a muted banjo. Christmas Eve, and as late as possible, had been chosen for the inauguration of the proceedings, on account of the sacred and indispensable Christmas turkey, which had to be cooked at home, and which could not be relied on to "keep" long in hot weather.

How hot, how unexpectedly, unreasonably and perversely hot it was!—just when it was particularly asked to make a young English lady comfortable and give her a good impression of the country she was desired to settle in. It was not much noticed in the night—the three little tents, allotted to the married couples and the girls respectively, were naturally stuffy; the young men on guard outside were envied their more airy quarters (where one of them was visited by a snake and the other by a horde of evicted ants); and the morning bath was delicious.

So was the breakfast on the greensward under the gold-tipped leaves—Aunt Susan's home-cured bacon and new-laid eggs—although even then the butter (out of the cooler, too) ran about like oil. But when it came to the hour of the state banquet—somewhere about mid-day

—there was a general, although unacknowledged, feeling that it was too hot to eat. As a matter of fact, the Melbourne Observatory was registering 105° in the shade, and instruments in many parts of the state made out much higher temperatures than that.

"Suppose we have a snack now, and dine in the evening?" Ned suggested anxiously, noting Lilian's languid aspect.

"My dear, we cannot—we must not," Aunt Susan made tremulous but emphatic answer. "This turkey must be eaten now, or—"

She sniffed, and sniffed again, her lip trembling more and more, until presently tears gushed forth.

Alas! it was not even "now," but never. The turkey was displayed for a moment in all its tantalising superficial beauty—eighteen pounds of delicately fatted flesh—and then ignominiously hurried away to a woodland grave.

"I wouldn't have had it happen for a thousand pounds," Aunt Susan wailed heart-breakingly; and when presently one of the best steak-and-kidney pies she had ever made was similarly disposed of, she so broke down with grief that they



"Ned rode a waggon horse to the township to get fresh milk."

WEATHER PERMITTING

had to give her eau-de-Cologne.

As the plum pudding was boiled, they ate that—after a first course of ham and hot potatoes ; and then ate their squashy strawberries without cream, which had turned, and later took tea with sliced lemon in it (to which they were unaccustomed), because the milk had curdled.

Quite a good Christmas dinner, nevertheless, as they all declared, and one that combined with the heat to render them incapable of exertion for some hours. They lay about in the shade like logs. Some pretended to read, some to smoke, Aunt Susan to knit ; but all loafed and dozed during the roasting afternoon, only waking to turn over, to grunt, to sigh, to slap at evasive flies. Ned Amory could not even rouse himself to make love. Lilian did not care whether he wanted to or not.

They revived a little when evening came. Ned rode a waggon horse to the township to get fresh milk, and a good cup of tea, with that milk in it, did wonders for them all. They rambled about afterwards, listened to the jackies' concert at nightfall ; and the engaged lovers disappeared in one direction, and the younger married couple in another ; and Lilian had the energy to devote herself to Aunt Susan, and Ned to be annoyed thereby. But oh, how hot it was ! How breathlessly still and sultry ! None of them went to bed till the small



“Never !” cried Lilian, her cheeks burning under the lashing rain”—p. 100.

hours, and then it was impossible to sleep.

Next morning it was worse. The bath at dawn was delicious, and all had appetites for the early tea and rasher ; but clothes clung to flesh, and hair out of curl clung to damp foreheads ere the day had well begun. Still, they were out to make holiday, and could not allow the weather to interfere unduly with that purpose. So after breakfast they set out for a distant beauty spot—all save the old couple, who preferred to keep house.

Thunder began to roll and lightning to play about their path when they were several miles from their destination and several more from the camp ; and in the midst of their luncheon the rain

began to pour down. They packed up their baskets in haste, and ran for shelter—first into a deeper dell, where tree-fern umbrellas spread wide and thick ; then, when the great fronds became as so many kitchen colanders, into the hollow trunk of a giant eucalyptus—to wait for the storm to pass.

But that was a storm which let down five inches of cloud-water all at once (by the reckoning of official gauges), and consequently they were in their hollow tree all the afternoon. At nightfall Lilian and Ned were still there. Percy Wilbraham and Connie Sargent (to make more room for the others) had found another hollow tree. Morton Amory had gone down to the camp

THE QUIVER

to succour the old folks, and the chaperon—running to call after her husband—had lost herself. Whereupon the inevitable occurred.

"You will never forgive me, I know," Ned observed, gloomily, to his companion, when the approach of darkness, combined with other considerations, sent her desperately plunging down the wild ravines, where every footpath was the bed of a swirling torrent or a glissade of slippery mud.

"Never!" cried Lilian, her cheeks burning under the lashing rain, her hands bleeding from her reckless clutchings at prickly things. "Never in the world! A man who can take advantage of a woman in such a defenceless situation——"

But all he had done was to put his coat over her shoulders and an arm over that to hold it on! Uncle John found them, at midnight, scrambling in the drenched thickets, soaked to the skin, frightened out of their wits—and not on speaking terms with one another. Such was the spirit of this wisp of a girl.

* * * * *

Well, it rained, and rained, and rained. Five inches in twenty-four hours to start with, and after that more than anybody cared to measure. The Morton Amorys talked of retreating to the shut-up house in town, but it was too wet to get there. Recognising, however, the dire necessity of being jolly, in spite of all, they snuggled together in the waggon, over the hood of which Uncle John rigged the tarpaulin which nobody but himself had wished to bring; that is to say, Kate snuggled to her husband, and Connie Sargent to Percy Wilbraham. Though they were as herrings in a barrel, Lilian would not touch so much as a coat-sleeve of Ned's, although unfailingly polite to him at a distance.

When they could dry themselves in the open, and get kettles and saucepans to boil once more, it turned cold as winter. Never had there been such cold in January, as never had there been such rain. They shivered in all the clothes they had to wear, and in their beds at night; the best bonfire they could build warmed them only on one side. There was snow on Mount Juliet—that will tell you! And Lilian, though her eyes watered with catarrh, and her nose was blue, and the marrow of her every bone froze in the cutting wind, would

not be wrapped in any man's coat again. Then, suddenly, it was warm again. It grew fiercely hot. That awful week, which no one who passed through it can ever forget, set in. This was the report of the Government meteorologist:

January 15th, Wednesday	102.0 degs.
16th, Thursday	106.4 "
17th, Friday	109.3 "
18th, Saturday	104.1 "
19th, Sunday	105.7 "
20th, Monday	107.2 "

A temperature of this sort—but not weighted with the humidity of an equally excessive rainfall—for a day or two, perhaps three days, was nothing out of the common; but a week was a thing unknown to the oldest colonist, or to the Weather Bureau since it had been established. Before it was half through business was disorganised, schools were disbanded, and the paper printing daily lengthening lists of "deaths from heat." Horses dropped in their tracks, fowls died wholesale in yards and markets, sheep by the thousand on the stricken plains; while poor human beings lost pluck as well as strength, let their affairs go to the dogs, and the decencies of life to the winds, and wallowed coatless and collarless, unbuttoned and dishevelled, in undignified despair.

And did our young lady's obduracy melt in this burning, fiery furnace? Not at all. While Percy Wilbraham sponged, and fanned, and purveyed drinks from the butter-cooler to the prostrate Connie Sargent, Ned Amory had to see his lady-love grow paler and more languid daily, without daring to lift a hand in succour. However weakened by the torment of the continual heat, her eye had but to meet his yearning glance to harden instantly, and all his excuses for the behaviour of his boasted climate she received with cutting gibes.

"Call this a climate? It is the most abominable country I ever saw. Give me England—and an English Christmas—every time!"

But then there came, at last, the crowning phenomenon—a moment more psychological than ever moment was—which broke her defences down before she knew it.

It was on the evening of the 20th. They had just finished the tough chops (alive that morning), which, brought half-way up the

WEATHER PERMITTING

mountain by a Healesville butcher, now made their nightly dinner, and they were sprawling about the hot ground or sitting in drooping postures on logs, too weary to attempt the usual twilight ramble, when suddenly Morton Amory shouted, "Look! look, all of you!"—springing to his feet as if something had shot him.

In an instant they were all standing, all looking. And rarely indeed does Nature, in her most freakish manifestations, present such a wonder to human gaze. It was a minute or two before they realised what was happening; then it struck them all at once.

"Oh!—oh!
—oh!"

"Lord be praised!"

"Oh, Morton—Auntie—girls—it is the change! The change at last!"

"The change!" they cried in unison. "The change at last!"

But who had seen the change come like this before? Not invisibly, with just a quick shift of wind, but in bodily shape, like a celestial army marching through a gap of the ranges straight towards them. Its pale form—not fog, nor mist, nor rain—blotted out the stars behind it, while all about it they shone in a clear sky; and it

advanced slowly and steadily, spread over, and filled the great valley at the watchers' feet, until the high point on which they stood was an island in a white sea, dotted with smaller islands that were the tops of trees. And before that tide of heavenly coolness the terrible heat dispersed and passed; the dead air lived and breathed again; and the sense of awe, of peace, of ecstatic thankfulness—the unspeakable bliss of human existence and the utter puerility of its passing vexations—uplifted the souls of the little party, exalted them above themselves.

The old man stood a few minutes, with solemn eyes and smiling lips, leaning on his old wife's shoulder; and she stood gravely by him, her hand laid over his, to feel the refreshing air go through her. Then she spoke:

"We shall sleep to-night. Make me a

good fire, John. I'm going to cook them a hot supper."

Morton Amory held Kate in the crook of an elbow, and her cheek lay against his breast.

"Oh, Morton," she sighed, "isn't it too, too sweet? After all we have gone through!"



"The need of sympathy overcame her. She turned to her only companion. She held out her hand"—p. 102.

THE QUIVER

"Yes, dear," he answered gently. "But don't you think you had better put something more on? And tell the girls to do so as well."

"Presently—presently. Don't disturb them yet."

With one movement she lifted her head, and he turned his. They glanced together at the two young couples, and the host laughed under his breath.

"We'd better make ourselves scarce," he whispered.

"Yes, yes," the chaperon whispered back.

Even as they spoke, Percy Wilbraham and Connie Sargent anticipated the necessary manœuvre; his arm around her neck and hers across his back, they faded like

shadows into the trees behind. Morton and Kate faded after them. Lilian and Ned were left alone.

She stood rooted to the ground by the wonder of what she saw and felt. That "cool change," which English people do not know the meaning of—the majesty of its unusual approach—the exquisite relief from suffering that it brought, all in a moment, when the suffering had become intolerable—it was overwhelming, intoxicating. She drew long breaths of physical rapture, threw back her transfigured face, its wet eyes closed, and so remained a minute or two, drinking in the divine elixir. Then the need of sympathy overcame her. She turned to her only companion. She held out her hand.



"London put on all its gala array to greet the Prince that was to end an era of tyranny."
(*The Truce of Christmas*, p. 106.)

The Truce of Christmas

By **BASIL MATHEWS, M.A.**

Illustrated by **SIDNEY SEYMOUR LUCAS**

IN the cobbled market place of Rouen a group of citizens chatted. They wrapped their long cloaks around them more closely to shield their gaunt bodies from the piercing wind that swirled round the corner and played a furious whirling game with the drifting snow. The wind was grimly playful, but all the vivacity of the men and women of Rouen had gone. No children played in the streets. The grey sky reflected the grey despair of the city.

"The feast of the Christ-Child to-morrow!" said Henri Janicot with a wan, ironical smile.

"The feast will be a fast, *mon ami*," replied his companion, "as every day hath been these score of weeks past." And he dropped his hands with a hopeless gesture.

"Tis so," replied Henri. "Here we have 200,000 souls to feed. From corn and wine we have come to bran and vinegar, and from that to nothing. These English dogs have surrounded our city with the skill of demons. And the heart of their King Henry is as Jean the Miller's grinding stone for hardness. Fresh meat and kale have given place to the flesh of dogs and cats, mice and rats, with a seasoning of grass and weeds. *Ma foi!* a Merry Christmas indeed!" And a mirthless laugh shook his thin frame.

The French soldiers, looking down from the battlements of Rouen, saw the black, swirling waters of the swollen Seine as it licked the masonry of the city wall. On the northern bank a hundred camp-fires, the clash of steel, and the hum of voices, revealed the exulting English army as it grimly waited the inevitable surrender of the besieged city. They were led by the fiercest soldier of the fifteenth century, King Henry V., the man of whom Shakespeare writes as "the warlike Harry" —

"And at his heels,
Leashed in like hounds, do famine, sword and fire,
Crouch for employment."

The bitter cold of the winter of 1418 was adding its pang to the sufferings of the besieged citizens of the capital of Normandy. Thoughts of mercy had hitherto beat unavailingly on the heart of the King-General. Since the beginning of August he had ringed the city with a hoop of steel-clad soldiers. Success or failure in life hung for him on the fall of Rouen.

It was the eve of Christ's nativity. And the English soldiers were dreaming of wassail and song in the homeland. So there rose on the evening air the sound of the St. Ambrose carol :

"Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene,
And twilight never intervene."

Under the impulse of the message of the angels' song, the chivalry and compassion of the steel-hearted king were stirred. With a sudden, generous impulse he called his servants and gave orders. There was to be no attack to-morrow. The men of Rouen were to worship in peace. Busy preparations began, and, with glowing faces the camp servants stuffed the great creaking baskets with good fare for the starving French. When Christmas Day came the men and women and children of Rouen ate such delicate and satisfying foods as they had not seen for many days. Henry V., the most daring and determined of royal soldiers, whose dearest wish was to starve his foes into surrender, had remembered the birth of the Peace-Child. He was under the spell of the Truce of Christmas.

A Festival of Music

Exactly ten years later a group of men, the very flower of English chivalry, stood looking across the bridge that spanned the swift Loire, to where, on the other side, were reared the long, straight, frowning walls of Orleans. Suffolk and Talbot, with lesser officers, were discussing how long the besieged soldiers and citizens



"With glowing faces the camp servants stuffed the great creaking baskets with good fare, and bore them to the starving French"—p. 103.

of France could hold out against the determined siege of the English. They stood on the battlements of the sturdy castle of Les Tournelles, which the English held, where it towered over the frozen wastes between Orleans and Blois, along the valley of the Loire.

A fierce, gusty autumn of wind and driving rain had developed into a bitter winter, and through December the besieged men starved as the citizens had starved in Rouen. But the glorious revolutionary spirit of Christmas was brooding over the camp. The soldiers put aside pike and sword, and, getting together every musical instrument in camp, went down to the river and played and sung carols,

as Christmas waits, under the very walls of the enemy. Suffolk, Talbot, and the other knights, caught by the contagious enthusiasm of mercy, entered eagerly into the spirit of truce, and, with all the busy zeal that marks the preparation of Christmas presents, collected and despatched to Dunois, the French commander, sumptuous dishes and delicate fruits so that the French might celebrate the season with revelry. Dunois, with fine French courtesy, sent the messengers back with rolls of black plush to line the English cloaks against the rigour of winter.

These two rifts in the war clouds of history are not mere isolated gleams of light. They run, with "an increasing purpose," right through the centuries. The Truce of Christmas softens the relentless government of Rome, creeps under the steel casque and corselet of a mediæval emperor, gleams among the mountains of modern Afghanistan, leaps to life on the plains of Abyssinia, pushes aside with firm hand the rifle, lightens army tents in Christmas midnight watches in India.

One of its first great triumphs came at the very outset of the fourth century. In the Christmas of the year 303 an enormous throng of Christians, blazing

THE TRUCE OF CHRISTMAS

with enthusiasm for their religion, assembled in Nicomedia, in Bithynia, and the monstrous Diocletian, surrounding the town with soldiers, fired it, and some 20,000 Christians were martyrs to their cause. The apparent triumph of pagan vindictiveness was really its last furious spasm. For on the following Christmas, with Constantine as Emperor, the Christians crowded into Rome and covered the roofs of the public halls, filling the air with shouts of "Alleluia, Alleluia!"

In a thousand similar ways the Truce of Christmas has laid its hand on cruelty and war to declare "peace on earth." It took the barbaric Saturnalia—the riotous revels during which Nero murdered the young Prince Britannicus and Christians were thrown into the imperial fish ponds—cleansed them from their vice and cruelty, but kept the merry revelry that marks our modern Christmas. It took the mistletoe that hung on the oaks above the Druid altars stained with human blood, and hung the berries from oak beams as signals for far jollier captures.

Right the way through the centuries Christmas has been seized on as the great day for the settlement of quarrels and the auspicious beginning of new reigns. At Christmas the Wise Men of the Saxons rode along their highways to hold debate, and singled out the season for hospitality to the poor. William the Conqueror chose that day to begin his reign of unification. Even the conquered Saxon forgot to be surly, and cheerfully joined his Norman mate as—

"In the hall, the serf and vassal
Held, that night, their Christmas wassail;
Many a carol, old and saintly,
Sang the minstrel and the waits."

At Christmas the barons joined to ask for the Great Charter that lies at the foundation of English liberty, and Simon de Montfort opened a new era by summoning the first English Parliament. At Christmas "the posie in which the White Rose and the Red Rose were tied together" brought civil war to an end, for Henry Tudor then ended the Wars of the Roses by arranging to marry Elizabeth of York. One might stretch out the splendid line of Christmas "great days" in a glittering pageant of banquets and coronations, stretching from that dawning day of



"As twilight fell to night a monster camp-fire was lighted"—p. 109.

THE QUIVER

Europe when Charles, the first of German emperors, was crowned eleven centuries ago, to the day when a lasting truce was declared over all the fighting German principalities and powers by the placing of the Imperial purple on William in 1870.

A Memorable Stuart Christmas

It was on the very eve of Christmas, on a stormy, rainy morning, that London put on all its gala array and thronged in its thousands, with fluttering ribbons and pennons of orange, to greet the Prince that was to end an era of tyranny. That morning in 1688 a crestfallen king had launched on the ruffled Thames, and was being pulled down to the sea in his barge, never to return to London again. And, as James fled, William came marching in from the West, with all the acclamations of Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset sounding at his back, and the almost frenzied joy of London because of the end of its long nightmare. Hats bedecked with orange ribbon were waved in the air. Even the *blasé* dandies flourished canes with orange tassels. Every window was illuminated with candles. Great bonfires threw a lurid light over the houses, and on the eager faces of women and children as they looked out from the casements. And every room and staircase in St. James's Palace was thronged with the great of the land hailing the new truce of king and people that has never since been broken.

Christmas in the Indian Mutiny

We leap the centuries. It was Christmas Eve in 1857. But in place of the glittering white of snow on larch trees there came that mysterious glimmer of lamps through the white canvas of tapering tents. The British Army, out to quell the Mutiny in India, was encamped at Intha. It had rained heavily, and the whole host was waiting through Christmas Eve for the clear sky of the morning, and the sun's warmth to dry the canvas preparatory to the order to "Strike tents" and march. They were to hurl their forces against the Sepoys and drive them into the river.

On Christmas morning a brilliant sun shone, lighting up the white roofs, domes, and minarets that revealed the

dreaming city of the East, on the horizon ahead of them. The tents quickly dried in the heat. The soldiers awaited the order to march. But Lord Clyde still sat in his tent. He was thinking of the homeland where his nation and his own people were entering on a happy season of festivity. The brooding spirit of the Truce of Christmas was upon him. He rose, called an officer, and gave the order that war should cease for the day. The soldiers, overjoyed, gladly seized occasion by the hand. Lord Clyde himself set a contagious example by ordering a banquet for his friends. Night fell, but not on a battlefield where the wounded groaned and the dead lay with ghastly faces to the white moon. Night fell on the glow of camp-fires, on trestle tables creaking under Christmas fare, and on the sound of merry-making throughout the camp, while roaring choruses surged into the sky, as men toasted their comrades in war and their friends in the old home.

Between French and Germans

The pageant of the truce goes on, moving to a day thirteen years later, when French and Germans lay encamped one against the other, in the fiercest campaign of the Franco-Prussian war. The story is best told in the words of the captain who witnessed it.

"On the night preceding December 25th, 1870," the captain began, "I was in command of a company of volunteers engaged in the defence of Paris. As I was walking about, the cold was biting bitterly. One of the men came up to me, and saluting, said, 'Captain, I want you to permit me for a little while to leave the trenches.'

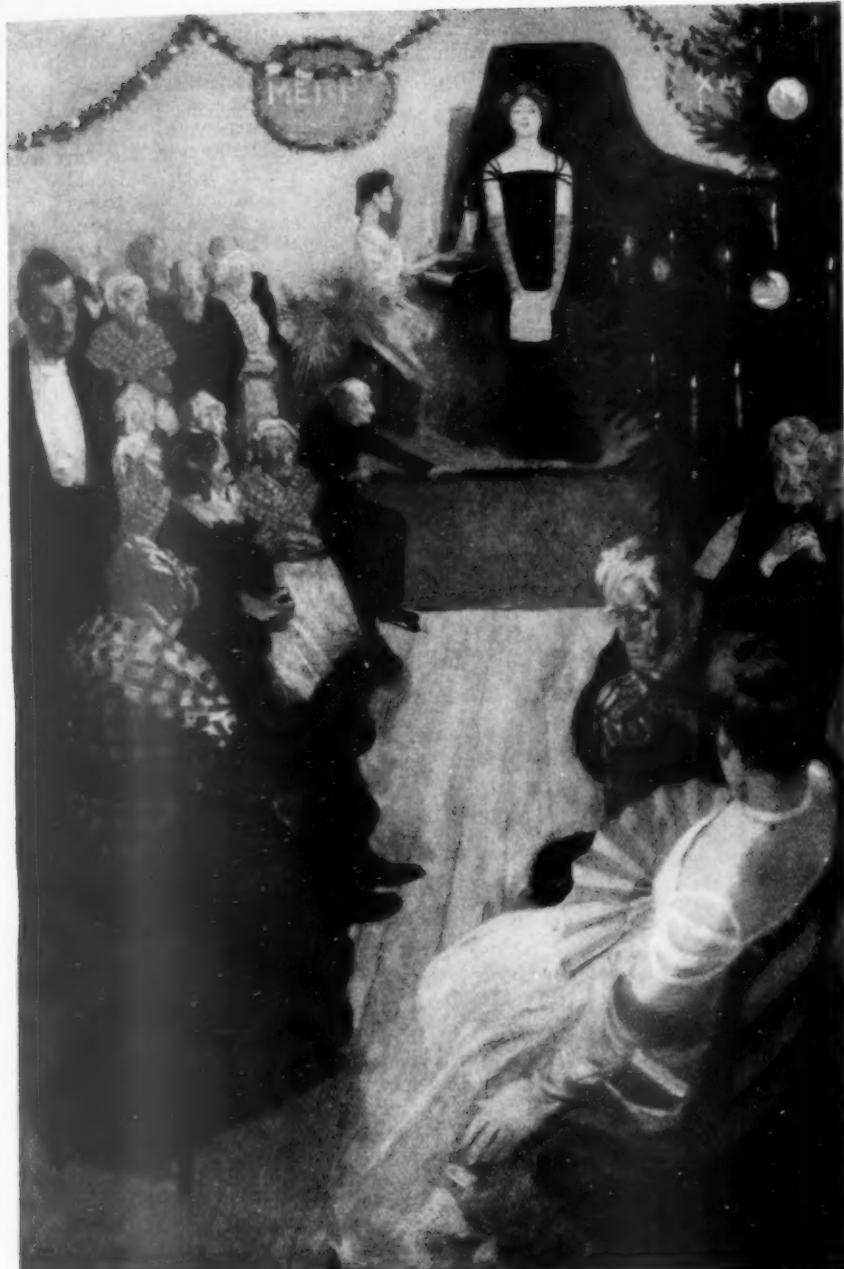
"'Impossible! You want to go to Paris?'

"'No, not to Paris,' said he, smiling, 'but in that direction,' pointing towards the Germans.

"He had aroused my curiosity. I granted him permission, but warned him that he would most probably get killed.

"'No fear,' he said, and, leaping out of the trenches, he walked into the plain.

"We followed him with our eyes, listening for the sharp crack of the enemy's rifles, and expecting at every step to see him fall. Not a sound save the



"My Lady Bountiful helps to entertain the aged folk in the 'Union,' while her daughter captivates them with her songs"—p. 109.

THE QUIVER

crunching of the frozen snow beneath his feet! As soon as he had come within hearing of the German sentinels he paused,



"As soon as he had come within hearing of the German sentinels, he paused, saluted, and began a well-known Christmas hymn."

saluted, and began to sing the well-known Christmas hymn with the refrain :

"Noel! Noel! Christ is King of Israel."

"It was so unexpected, and so simply done, the strain took from the night, the scene, the circumstances, such a beauty and sublimity, that the least religious of

us hung upon his lips, and the hardest hearted in our trench were moved.

"The Germans neither spoke nor stirred.

As soon as X— had done his hymn, he gave another military salute, turned on his heel, and deliberately walked back to our line.

"Well, captain," said he, "are you sorry that you gave me leave?"

"Before I could reply a soldier had begun to move across the snow from the opposite camp. He, like X—, saluted, and, between the companies of armed men, he sang a lovely German version of the 'Noel, Noel,' that the French recruit had sung. I gave orders, though they were superfluous, not to fire on him. He sang the hymn through, verse by verse, and when he came to the refrain the soldiers in both camps joined in the chorus :

"Noel! Noel! Christ hath ransom'd Israel!"

"The same emotion filled all hearts. All diversities and enmities had been forgotten in the presence of the Prince of Peace. The soldier then departed to the German lines and disappeared. A few hours later we began to fire again."

In Afghanistan

From the plain of the Seine to the rocky heart of Afghanistan is a mighty leap. Nine Christmases later, however, a plucky band of English cavalry was pushing forward rapidly in the evening. Right and left loomed the mighty mountains, the natural ramparts and impregnable hiding places of the wily Afghan. The horsemen climbed the steep boulder-strewn path, and then descended the defiles of the Khyber Pass. On either side of them were glowing holly-trees, from which hung festoons of growing mistletoe. For the mistletoe, the soldiers agreed, with grim smiles, they had no use, for half the

THE TRUCE OF CHRISTMAS

world lay between them and the maidens whom they would have led under its berries.

The gorge narrowed, and the darkness deepened, while from the cliff-like heights came now and then the flash of an Afghan gun, and the sharp whizz of a bullet that flattened itself against the rock. They pressed on through the dark, and, as the cold grey dawn came up, the pass widened and dropped, till, in the dim distance, amid rising mists, they could distinguish the gleam of the white tents of the main British force.

It was Christmas morning, and they put their tired horses to a hand-gallop as they caught the sharp sound of bugles sounding for church parade. Then, as General Kinloch met them and shook hands, they heard the greeting shouts of "Merry Christmas," forgot the Afghan quarrel, and the smarting desire for reprisals on the men who had fired on them from the hill-tops.

They fell into rank behind the flagstaff round which the men had twisted holly. The regimental band struck up "Home, Sweet Home," and they marched to service. After worship came feasting. The soup was served in iron mugs and enamelled tea-cups; the plum-pudding was eaten off metal plates. But the incongruity only served as stimulus for louder laughter. Banter and chaff circled more and more wildly round the tables as the spirit of Christmas gained increasing sway.

As twilight fell to night a monster camp-fire was lighted, and rich young voices rose in the darkness with songs that brought memory of the homes from which the men had come. The darting flames of the camp-fire shone on the bearded faces of men who shaded their eyes with bronzed hands.

A Truce with Poverty

The characteristic war of the twentieth century, however, is not with shell and shrapnel, rifle and cannon. It is the war whose growl unceasingly rumbles in the roaring streets of London, of Manchester, Glasgow, and Birmingham, the fight for a living, the great competitive campaign. Here the regiments move to the front in trainloads every morning, and are hurled into the trenches

in tube and tram, in 'bus and taxicab. And in the crowded haunts of poverty, in the slums of East and West, lie the wounded and beaten. But Christmas brings its truce even to that age-long strife.

The invisible barriers that divide class from class, the ramparts of caste, are forgotten in the enthusiasm of Christmas. It is not easy to break down all those differences of point of view, of education and training and habit, and to discover the common brotherhood that is in rich and poor alike. Yet a common sonship is found around the cradle of the Child in the inn.

At Christmas the grizzled and worn old road-mender, whose gnarled hands have broken their last piece of granite, chats with the squire, whose motor whizzes over the roads where the old man used to work. The aged laundress, whose wrinkled face has bent over the steam of a thousand washtubs, exchanges gossip with the dame whose linen she has wrung. The gulf between the Hall and the "House" is temporarily bridged. My Lady Bountiful in her silks helps to entertain the aged folk in fustian in the "Union," while her daughter captivates them with her songs. Music and laughter surround the glittering, candle-lighted tree. The dark days of poverty, that ought never to have come to the veteran labourer, are lighted by the gleam of good fellowship and the glow of good cheer. Jolly groups of romping children prance with joy and wriggle with excitement as toys of wonderful colour and shape come from the hand of a "real, live Father Christmas." The crippled and starvelings, with the veterans who have dropped out of the ranks through weakness, bask in the sunshine of goodwill. The clatter of dishes and the sound of song mingle in a happy medley with the hum and chatter of gossiping age and prattling childhood.

Christmas has declared its truce. The truce is great gain, but the battle which comes before and follows after is a dark shame. And the day gleams on the horizon when Christmas will not simply declare a truce of days, but, in the name of the Prince of Goodwill, shall sign an everlasting peace.

A Living Death

A Complete Story

By HAROLD BEGBIE

IT was a favourite saying with Miss Ransome that there would never have been an unkind thing said about old maids but for that barbarous and wicked invention called "Lodgings." "Anybody," she would say, in her resolute manner, "I don't care whether it is man or woman, married or single, *must* grow bitter and narrow in lodgings. I never see that dreadful word, 'Apartments,' dangled from a villa window without feeling that an ogre lurks behind the curtains to destroy the humanity of lonely people. Every old maid should live as I do, on the fourth floor of the best hotels."

She was really very happy, and a charming companion. As soon as she had recovered from a romance in her girlhood, and had realised that she was not very well off and quite alone in the world, she set herself to discover a manner of existence which would prevent her from growing crabbed and narrow and embittered, and perhaps ugly. She said to herself, "There are two things I must avoid: myself and lodgings." She noticed that, alone in a room, she was inclined to look at a certain photograph and let thought feed upon itself; while, out in the streets, even though she walked alone, she caught the happiness, good-humour, and cheerfulness of the multitude.

It seemed to her that her life would be nearer to the general life of humanity in those places where humanity lives a common existence, in the great hotels of the great cities of the world. She thoroughly endorsed the saying of one of her favourite French authors, that for a lonely woman to lose herself in a great apartment, to sit solitary at a table formerly surrounded by dear faces, to listen to the furniture creaking on winter nights, to entertain only the rare and formal caller, and to be in contact with the world merely through the newspapers, this was indeed *une petite mort*. To avoid that living death she sold up her furniture; and then, with all her possessions, including the photograph, contained in two formidable trunks, started out to see the world and to keep young.

She went first of all to Paris, and installed herself in a *pension*. This period of her life she described as a painful, but not uninteresting, probation. She was learning. In three months she had discovered that for very little more money than she was paying to Madame of the *Pension*, Monsieur of the Hotel would receive her as his guest. From that moment Miss Ransome became a woman of the world.

She lived on the fourth floor of the hotel, and her apartment was not a grand one; but there was a lift, and the *salon* and the *salle de lecture*, which were grand—grand enough for a monarch or a millionaire—were as much hers as the most fashionable guest's on the first and second floor. Then there was the *salle à manger*, with its little tables and its flowers and its music and its crowd of humanity—hers as much as it was anybody else's. What mattered the fourth floor, when the hotel was in the fashionable quarter, and from the window of her little room she could sit and watch the panorama of the streets?

There is a considerable number of solitary women who live this hotel life. They are the gypsies of civilisation, the nomads of our artificial society, a race by themselves. They have a knowledge of existence which is very interesting. They know, when the seasons come for prices to rise in the great capitals, where they can be entertained in smaller but most delightful cities unknown to the tourist; they know nearly all the hotels in Europe; their knowledge of routes is unrivalled; their ingenuity in little economies is amazing; and they have a cultured and intellectual gossip which is exceedingly diverting and thoroughly cosmopolitan.

Just as vagabonds of the road have an understanding between them, so these gentler vagabonds of the hotel constitute a sisterhood, and are perfectly at home with each other from the first moment of their meeting. They pass on the one to the other any information about landlords which may be useful, tell where good shoes or pretty lace or an evening blouse may be bought very cheaply, and advise each other with

A LIVING DEATH

the confidence of supreme authorities on every detail of that mystery which puzzles philosophers—human life.

Miss Ransome soon became a member of this sisterhood, and with her two big trunks began the life of wandering from hotel to hotel. It was pleasant to meet some French or Russian or English lady in Nice whom she had last seen in Paris, or to find herself in Florence one of a group which had last foregathered in Vienna. She read a great many books, looked into shop windows, visited museums and picture galleries, went occasionally to the opera, and sat in the sunshine of public gardens watching the children at play, the lovers walking under the trees and the old people reading the newspapers.

Sometimes she would look at the photograph on her mantelpiece (she usually had a few flowers on each side of its frame) and say, "I was wise to break my word; see how happy I am in this wander-life, and think of the life you wanted me to lead! My friend, I wonder if you have married some placid little *philanthrope* who shares all your good works, kneels at your side in church, and spends her happy evenings mending the children's stockings. I hope you have, although I loved you and almost let my love lead me to the disaster of marrying so good a man. I hope you are married, and that in your marriage you are as happy as I



"Sometimes she would look at the photograph."

am in my spinsterhood."

This was in the early years of her wandering.

Later, when she was five-and-thirty, she caught typhoid fever in Florence and lay at death's door for nearly three months. It was this experience which first made her reconsider the good opinion she had formed of the wander-life.

There was no friend to sit at her side, no loving hand to smooth her pillow, no one to bring flowers and place them in vases where she might rest her eyes on their colour and receive their perfume into her senses.

She remembered how nice a thing it had seemed to be ill in girlhood! What a fuss had been made of her, what constant coming and going from the sickroom,

what a lot of petting she had received!

But now, only a hastening chambermaid appeared at long intervals, leaving the door open when she entered, so quick must be her exit. The doctor came only three times a week. The nurse, who had been kind enough, but never affectionate or sympathetic, had departed. Blanche Ransome lay very much alone in her hot bed on the fourth floor, longing for more air, craving for a sight of the streets, desiring a friend.

When she had recovered she packed her trunk and departed for England. The doctor had counselled her to go to some seaside place on the East Coast. The long illness and

THE QUIVER

the tedious convalescence had kept her a prisoner in Florence till the end of July. The heat had been terrible. She was extremely weak and afflicted by a depressing languor. Often, when she was quite alone, she would burst into tears. She could not explain to herself why she cried.

On her journey across the Continent she met in the train an English lady travelling with her two daughters. From these people, who took compassion on the poor invalid travelling alone and did her endless little services, Miss Ransome heard of a Nursing Home in Hampstead, overlooking the Heath, where some of the first doctors in London sent their patients to recover. They begged her to go there, and not to dream of exposing herself to the heat and glare of the seaside in August. "Wait till you are stronger; wait till good nursing has made you quite able to look after yourself," said these kind people.

The idea of being nursed was very pleasant to Blanche Ransome, and she went to this Home in Hampstead.

One day, when she was beginning to feel almost quite well again, she walked as far as Golder's Hill, and sat down on a bench in the beautiful gardens. It was early on Saturday afternoon, and the place was beginning to fill with happy life. Blanche found it pleasant to sit on this bench, and under the shadow of her parasol to watch the constant procession of humanity. It was a very quiet, orderly, and self-conscious procession. Here and there walked an old gentleman and an old lady, or a mother and her children; but for the most part the procession consisted of youth at the stage of love—young men conscious of their fine clothes and girls conscious of observation.

Blanche hoped that all these young lovers would marry and be very happy.

Of a sudden, the quiet and the orderliness of the place were rudely broken. A hubbub of voices and a hurrying scraping of feet sounded through the trees and bushes. Blanche changed her parasol to the other shoulder and turned to look.

Round the corner of the walk came the oddest multitude in the world—a multitude of pale, thin, misshapen, and crippled children. They came with an eager rush; those who could use their feet were running, those who had two crutches were leaping forward, those who had only one hopped

along at a furious pace. They were all talking and shouting. Although they were so very pale and pinched, the faces of these poor children shone with a great light, as though it was a glory. Such joy transfigured their suffering little faces as Blanche Ransome had never seen, never imagined in all her life.

There was an opening in the walk close to the bench where she sat, and through this alley the children poured with a glad and excited rush. On the green grass—a wide expanse rising slowly to a tree-covered knoll—they disported themselves with a quite frantic delight. Some threw themselves down and rolled; others dragged rubber balls from their pockets and began to play; others set themselves eagerly to pick daisies.

It was a wonderful sight to see all these maimed and crippled children playing with such wild happiness in this beautiful garden.

At the end of the procession came three or four adults in charge of the party. One of these guardians carried a sweet little boy in his arms, whose face was so pale that it looked like death.

He was somewhat behind the others, and as he came slowly along with his burden Blanche Ransome felt moved to ask him the meaning of this strange junketing. As luck would have it, this little man, who had very kind eyes and a gentle voice, seeing the bench so close to the green, said to the child in his arms, "Look! there's a place specially kept for us," and he came and sat beside Blanche with the child on his lap. The boy was almost more shabby than any of the other children. Out of the top pocket of his ragged little jacket projected a tin whistle.

A number of the well-dressed people, it must be confessed, moved away, glancing with disapproval at the shabby children, as though they resented the sight of so much misery or feared infection from such tattered demelions.

Blanche smiled at the little cripple on the man's lap, and the boy opened his big eyes and stared with wonderment at the beautiful lady. She seemed to magnetise his gaze. It was as if he found her more rare and inexplicable than the flowers, the grass, and the green trees.

Presently she was talking to the man who nursed this child so affectionately.

He explained to her that a friend of the

A LIVING DEATH

Ragged School Union had provided money to give this treat to a hundred of their poorest cripples, and that vans from the Borough, and Plaistow, and West Ham had brought them all the way to Golder's Hill, where they would presently have tea. "The drive," he said, "was a great joy to them; but this, of course, is like Paradise. Isn't this, Stephen, exactly what you think Heaven will be like?" he asked, bending down to the boy. But the child only nestled closer to him, still gazing open-eyed at Blanche Ransome.

"Now, Stephen, would you like to please this nice lady very much indeed?" asked the little man. "I'm sure you would. Come"—he took the tin whistle from the top pocket and held it to the boy's hands—"just play one of your tunes to her, one of the prettiest."

The boy took the whistle, and, turning away from Blanche, put it to his lips. She could not see his face, but as she looked at the poor little thin neck, so wasted between

the tendons, and the little shabby jacket covering the round shoulders, he began to play, and playing, gradually brought his face half round to her. The profile was charming. Blanche felt her eyes grow soft.

The air played by this child was so gentle and sweet that it sounded to Blanche like some young shepherd of fairyland playing his pipe in asphodel meadows and dreaming of love. She was astonished at such music coming from the tin whistle, and from a child so pale and thin and wretched.

When the tune ceased and she had thanked him, the boy nestled against his guardian and continued to keep his fascinated gaze upon Blanche. There was a faint tinge of colour in his cheeks and a shadow under his dark eyes. He looked so pretty that Blanche leaned forward and pressed his hand and smiled into his eyes, asking him questions.

"We are very happy in our Cripples' Guild," said the guardian. "People who live fortunate lives, or their children, undertake to be the friend of one cripple. They



"He looked so pretty that Blanche leaned forward and pressed his hand and smiled into his eyes, asking him questions."

THE QUIVER

write a letter once a week--that is really all they need do--but many of them send old toys and books to their particular child, and some of them even have these little wards on occasional visits to their homes. This friendship makes a very happy interest in the lives of our little cripples, as you can imagine. Each child has an invisible friend in the happy world."

Before they separated, Blanche said, "I should like to know more about the Cripples' Guild. Would you mind sending me particulars?" She took a very affectionate farewell of little Stephen, and gave him half-a-crown to carry back with him to the Borough.

Two or three days afterwards a big envelope full of papers concerning the Cripples' Guild came to Blanche Ransome. With these papers was a letter from the gentleman she had spoken to at Golder's Hill. He sent her a list of little cripples, and particulars of their lives and parents, in case she should like to make herself a friend of one of them.

When Blanche replied to this letter it was to say that she should like to be the friend of Stephen.

Alas! the answer came that Stephen was already provided with a friend.

Then it was that Blanche realised how greatly her heart had gone out to the little boy with the pipe. She felt a terrible sense of deprivation, almost of bereavement, when this letter arrived. The big eyes of the child haunted her. The air which he had played on his pipe breathed through her memory; she found herself humming it. "For the first time in my life," she said, "I am in love, and it is in vain."

She sent a cheque to the Cripples' Guild, and said that, as she was always travelling, it would perhaps be unwise of her to undertake the office of a friend. She said that she should like to have the address of Stephen, to send him occasionally a picture postcard or a box of sweets, if she might be allowed to do so. A letter arrived acknowledging her cheque, giving Stephen's address, and saying there was no reason why she should not be his friend in the way she wished.

"It is very strange," said Blanche to herself, "that this little boy, whose life is a real *petite mort*, should make me feel that all my happy days of travel have been also a living death, and one far worse than his."

It came to her that she had lived all these years, not only unloved, but unloving.

The great impulse to mother and protect which exists in all good women had been held in check, had been poisoned and starved. What a selfish life she had lived! She looked back on all her journeyings, all her migrations, all her management of this great mystery called life, and saw that she had done nothing to alleviate pain, nothing to console affliction, nothing to make others happy. Ah, how guilty she felt! What a *petite mort* her life had been!

The memory of her long and lonely illness in Florence returned with new force to her mind. She reflected that there are thousands of poor people incurably ill, who lie in wretched garrets waiting for death amidst surroundings of the most horrible and depressing penury. How much sorrow and sadness and pain there is in the world! And she had done nothing! Ah, *petite mort*!

One day at Golder's Hill she saw clearly that her loneliness resulted from her selfishness. She must spend her life now in caring for others. She must make her own surroundings of love by loving some human being more than herself. She would love Stephen. Ever after this realisation she called Golder's Hill the garden of her illumination.

She began by sending the little boy a box of sweets and a packet of transfers. At first she thought of sending a loving letter with this gift, and of asking him to write her a letter in return; but her conscience rose within her and said, "You are doing a kindness only to benefit yourself. You are unloved, and you want to be loved; that is why you are sending these things." So she sent the parcel without a letter.

Every now and then she would send a picture postcard to Stephen, or a book of adventure, or some toy which she thought would amuse him, and every time the temptation to write and ask him if he loved her was very great, but she withheld it. She was trying to live a religious life.

A wonderful thing had happened to Blanche Ransome. She was in love with a child.

Her life was really as deeply changed as any sinner's converted from sin to goodness. She woke from a monotonous twilight to a golden dawn. She came from shadows and coldness into a place of sunlight and flowers. How gentle she became, how sweet and contemplative! Day and



"At the entry of the narrow court stood a number of very shabby people, who stared at her and made her feel afraid"—p. 116.

night she prayed for her little cripple; no mother could have loved her child more. At Holy Communion she prayed for him. Sometimes, thinking of him as she lay in her bed waiting for sleep, she would cry very softly and feel a great longing for him.

Penitence and expiation were in this devotion. Love for the child had revealed to her how selfish, how un-Christlike, all her past had been. She thought to expiate this long past of selfishness by denying herself the love of the child. She said, "I am Stephen's anonymous mother!"

But when winter came, and the air was filled with the sense of Christmas, Blanche could no longer restrain the hunger of her heart. For an hour, just for one little hour, she would indulge her love, her anonymous maternity. She dwelt on the thought with

an eagerness and an excitement which amazed her. She took pleasure in restraining this impulse, holding it back till Christmas Eve. When one loves very greatly there is pleasure in postponing delight. Blanche bought her presents and waited.

On Christmas Eve she set out for the *terra incognita* of the Borough. She went in a four-wheeled cab. It was bitterly cold, and she was well wrapped up in furs. One of the nurses at the Home had put a foot-warmer into the cab. She kept her hands in her muffs. On the opposite seat were several parcels. One of them contained a beautiful seven-stop whistle, made of silver.

It began to snow.

When the cab stopped in Borough High Street the air was thick with snowflakes and the pavements were a trodden welter

THE QUIVER

of snow water. Blanche left the cab at the kerb and passed up a narrow court, at whose entry stood a number of very shabby and savage-looking people who stared at her and made her feel afraid. She had to walk through two or three of the worst streets in London before she reached the house where Stephen lived.

Stephen's aunt opened the door. He was upstairs, she said. The little fellow had been ill ever since the cold came. It was bronchitis. They could not do very much for him. His mother was dead, and his father had gone to America; she and her husband—who were only uncle and aunt to him, when all was said and done—had children of their own; it could not be expected that they should do much.

The squalor of the home almost made Blanche regret that she had abandoned her anonymity. It was better to love at a distance. Disillusion was terrible. Her feelings towards Stephen seemed to undergo a change.

However, she went bravely up the dirty stairs, and found him in a dark room, lying, whiter than ever, on a bed so shabby and dreadful that it filled her with nausea. Oh, how she wished she had not come!

But the great eyes of the child so leapt and shone at her entrance that love rushed back into her heart. She forgot the dirty room, the dirty bed, the ill odours, and the hideous squalor, and only knew that the dying child was sitting up in bed, his hands pressed down at his side to support and keep him upright, his lips parted, and his eyes burning with wonder and love.

"Do you know who I am?" she asked, tenderly.

"Yes, yes!"

"You remember?"

"Yes, yes!" He was breathing excitedly. His pale cheeks were suffused with fiery colour. How his great eyes flashed!

She smiled and said, "But you haven't known, now, have you, who it was that sent you sweets and books and toys, and transfers?"

He had his arms round her neck, for she was kneeling at his side now. With his cheek pressed against hers, he whispered, "I hoped it was you. I was afraid to ask anyone in case it wasn't you."

She experienced a most delightful feeling, from which vanity was not free. To this

child she was beautiful and wonderful. Her colour came, her eyes sparkled, and she kissed him—gratefully. Is it not delightful to be loved?

"But I did ask at last," he said, stroking her hands, which were opening the parcels. "I thought it might be Mr. Cardew, so I asked him—"

She said, "Mr. Cardew?"

"But he said he hadn't sent them, and so I was glad, because I wanted it to be you. I've dreamed of you often and often. I've dreamed that you kissed me!"

"Mr. Cardew, Stephen?" She gave him the silver whistle. Her hand was trembling.

"That's my friend. He lives right across London, by that park where the King lives; he has taken me there, and I've seen the wild birds on the lake. Oh, what a beautiful whistle! It's like silver! Is it silver? Real silver?"

While they were talking there was a sound of a man's foot on the stairs.

Stephen exclaimed, "It's Mr. Cardew! He always comes on Christmas Eve."

The room was now so dark that it was impossible to distinguish each other's face. Woman and child leaned towards each other, embracing, and looked towards the door. It opened, and a dark figure entered.

"Stephen!" said a kind voice.

"Mr. Cardew! what do you think?" cried the boy excitedly. "The kind lady who sent me all those things is here, and it is the same lady I told you about."

He came forward and said, "Well, you'll have so many toys this Christmas that you won't know what to do with them. However, the Evelina Hospital is not far!"

"She has brought me a silver whistle, a real silver one. Look!"

Blanche rose and said:

"It is very dark, but I recognise your voice, Arthur." She held out her hand.

He did not start, but, taking her hand, he bent his face towards her, and said:

"What is your name? Tell me."

"I am Blanche Ransome. But—so changed!" She smiled as she added, "I have learned to love others."

They stood facing each other in the darkness of the garret, looking into each other's eyes. As they stood there Stephen lifted the silver pipe to his lips and very softly played the air which Blanche had first heard in the garden of her illumination.



By the LORD BISHOP OF RIPON

"They that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined"—ISAIAH ix. 2.

AN old saying tells us that "People never know when they are well off." This means that we seldom measure our blessings. Our attention is too often fixed on what we have not. We hardly heed what we have. How many among the prosperous are happy? There is always something which is wanting to complete their happiness. Christmas is the festival of gladness. There ought to be no murmuring hearts, if we measure rightly the meaning of its gladness; not dwelling on what we wish for, but endeavouring to realise the great change which the birth of Christ has wrought in human thought.

It has come, therefore, into my mind that we may measure Christmas gladness by a comparison. Let us picture what the winter festival of our forefathers meant: let us compare it with our Christmas festival. Thus we may be able to judge the greatness of our Yuletide blessing.

Yuletide Long Ago

Here then, first, is the picture of the Yuletide festival of olden days. It is long ago, and our ancestors, unblessed with the artificial protection which we enjoy in winter's cold, are watching anxiously the behaviour of the sun. They know, as we do, that the sun is a blessed power for good; they know that its beams give light and warmth: a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun. They know more than this: they know

that when the sun shines upon the earth in the long summer days the earth responds and brings forth food for man. Knowing this, they watch the movements of the sun, and as the winter comes on they note that the sun gives less of his smile to the earth.

The Shortening Days

As the days shorten, they watch the sun with ever-increasing anxiety. The days of November are shorter than those of July or August, and the days of December are shorter still. Is the great sun slowly withdrawing his face? Is this great and blessed power angry, and is he going to leave the earth to cold and darkness? Are their homes, once gladdened and cheered by the sun which rose upon them early and reluctantly left them for a brief and faintly darkened night, after having been smiled upon for long and luxurious summer hours, to be bereft of the sun's brightness and genial warmth? Such dulled and darkened dwellings would hardly be homes to them. So we can imagine them watching the sun's behaviour with anxious hearts and questioning spirits.

The December days brought ever-shortening visits of the sun. Each day the blessing of his presence grew scantier, and when the twenty-first day of December came, with its shorn hours of sun, the anxiety reached its climax; the days which followed were more eagerly observed,

THE QUIVER

and the watching people knew the pangs of doubt. As the days passed a faint hope sprang up. Some deemed that the days were not shortening ; some declared that they were even lengthening. And so the twenty-second, the twenty-third, and the twenty-fourth of the month passed, and then with the twenty-fifth the doubt which had changed to hope became the hope which changed to certainty.

The Festival of the Victorious Sun

With certainty came a deep joy ; with joy the desire to express it. December the twenty-fifth became a day of festival, and the festival was the festival of the gracious and victorious sun, who was returning in strength to the earth, who had banished the fear of the power of darkness, who was beneficent, and faithful in his beneficence, and who would once more fill the homes of man with light and heat and plenty. And so the festival of winter became a festival of rejoicing among people who understood but little of the world, but did understand how needless was the light of the sun for the gladness and completeness of life as they knew it.

A Parable of Christmas Gladness

We have been trying to put ourselves back into the thoughts and fears and joys of our ancestors. Can we not see how much fuller than theirs are our lives and thoughts ? The Nature thought which predominates in their winter festival may give us a parable of our own Christmas gladness ; but in finding the parable we shall see that our winter festival is richer in meaning, deeper in insight, and wider in range than was theirs.

The winter festival of our ancestors was a feast of gladness because the light and warmth of the sun was assured to them. They had been fearing that cold and darkness would be their portion ; they rejoiced in the restoration to them of the power of the sun. They were thinking of physical need ; the world since then has taken up deeper problems.

There have been times in its history when men have put evil and dark interpretations upon life. The experiences of

life resemble those of our ancestors : darkness mingles with light, night with day, sorrow with joy. And often men have asked which is the stronger, the dark or the light. Is evil greater than good ? Is life itself so fully charged with disappointment, disease and pain that the greatest happiness is to be found in escaping from its burdens ? When dark thoughts like these take hold of the soul, then even the beautiful things in Nature take upon them a sinister appearance. The recurrence of the seasons, the ebb and flow of tides, the alternations of day and night, seem to be wearyful and monotonous. "All things," said the Preacher, "are full of labour ; man cannot utter it. . . . The thing which hath been, it is that which shall be ; and that which is done is that which shall be done : and there is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. i. 8, 9). In the same fashion the sacred books of the East utter the cry of vanity and weariness. Impermanence is marked on everything ; love is pain ; life is pain : to escape from life's illusions and to reach a state which is beyond feeling and knowing is the thing most to be desired.

This is the pessimistic interpretation of life. It has been common enough when men have felt the burden of existence ; it has been strong enough to appear to put even questions of right and wrong in doubt. There were writers among the Jews who saw what was right and sought to follow it ; but experience came and showed them, as it were, a horrible vision—the valuelessness of right. "I do see the ungodly in such prosperity," was the cry of him who saw that the good man did not always meet good fortune. Was it to be wondered that such a man should begin to doubt whether it was worth while being good ?

The Optimism of Christmas

Now Christmas Day carries us far away from such pessimistic views of life. Jesus Christ is born : He lies as a little child in the manger ; life as yet has not disclosed itself to His infant mind ; all its experiences are yet to come. If this Infant Christ be in truth the Word which was with God and was God (John i. 1), here is a wonderful thing ! Will any of



THE LORD BISHOP OF RIPON

(Photo: Dinkham, Torquay.)

THE QUIVER

us say that life is not worth living, seeing that Christ was sent of His Father to face life? There must be some use, some value, some great and far-reaching purpose in life, if He Who was the Word, came and took up life.

Christ's Interpretation of Life

Let us, however, watch this life of Christ; let us remember the pessimistic interpretation some gave to life; let us note the interpretation of life which Christ will give.

We may remember that His life was one of labour; it was that of a man of sorrows; it led through toil and tears to the crown of thorns and to the cross. But Jesus Christ is no pessimist. On the contrary, He interprets life by light. Over all is the Father, sending rain and sunshine on the evil and the good; He takes the best instincts of human love and interprets God through them: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" As we read Christ's life we see work and suffering, but the atmosphere in which He lives is one of sunshine. We go with the crowd of pessimists, and we hear their doleful interpretations of life. Christ comes and stands among them, His head crowned with thorns. They, like our ancestors, watching the shortening days, interpret life by their fears: there is no hope; the days grow shorter; the dark will win. Then Christ speaks: the evil will go; the good is stronger; light will prevail.

The Triumph of Good

Yes, even though we may have experience of darkening days in which the power of light seems to shrink, yet the final victory is with good; there are hours which seem to belong to the power of darkness, but these pass and the sunshine will win. And even at the very worst the sun never dies. The December days of life's experience have their place in a world for which there is summer as well as winter, and even in winter a never-failing sun.

The Festival of the Light

Jesus Christ took away the pessimistic interpretation of life: He showed that

behind all life was God—the Father-bestowing upon man life and life's experiences, that man might find in life an education towards a higher good; men might suffer, but they need not perish; they might pass through the valley of darkness, but they need never die. As long as the sun's power remains unquenched, so long will flowers and fruits spring from the bosom of the earth. As long as God is God, life is assured to man. "Because I live, ye shall live also," said Jesus Christ.

It is always open to us to explain day by night or to explain night by day; to explain life by the dark things or by the light. Christ taught us, not only to "cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt," but to live in the light and love which, now less seen and now more, is never absent from the lives of men.

Thus Christmas Day is the festival of the Light which lighteth every man and which never fails.

The Festival of the Home

But we may follow the parable a step farther. Our ancestors passed through a time of fear which ended in gladness. The play of the emotions has a real value; the sentimental is the man who places reason at the mercy of sentiment; but though sentimentalism is to be avoided, life would possess little educational value if nothing occurred to rouse our emotions and to stir our feelings.

Those who feared that the earth was about to be given over to cold and darkness knew the emotions of fear and suspense: they knew also the feeling of relief, the emotions of joy, when the power of the sun was shown to be triumphant. We do not live by reason only; we find the highest moments of life through our emotions. We live more in an hour of deep gladness or heavy sorrow than in a day of mental labour or mechanical toil. The winter festival was a festival of rejoicing. The joy that followed close on the heels of fear made all human ties doubly dear.

So for us does Christmas Day draw all of us closer together. Christmas Day is the festival of the home. If behind all things there is the love of God, then the love which banished pessimism from life

THE FESTIVAL OF THE HEART

must enlarge our thoughts and give tenderness to our affections. The love which took our manhood into God has made all human ties dear with a sweet sense of sacred kinship. Christmas becomes the festival of the heart—the great human festival.

The Festival of the Heart

It is the festival of the heart. It is love coming to earth. The very season gives an emphasis to the thought.

The keen frost, the bitter wind that lashes the face and searches out the weakness of the clothing, the early darkness which sends its gloom along the streets and robs earth of her colours, make one think wistfully of the warm fireside, the friendly greeting, the loving thoughtfulness, the welcome of the home! Everything outside the house conspires to make us value all that is within the house; Nature turns a cold shoulder and a chilling eye upon us, and we remember that it is not in beauty of scene, or wealth of colour, or magnificence of foliage, that life's best things are to be found; we begin to appreciate the kindness and constancy of heart that makes fair scenes sweet and that keeps a warm place for us when all outside is dark and cold.

Spring brings the festival of hope when prophecies of beauty and fulness may be read in fields and hedgerows. Summer brings the feast of the eye when earth is arrayed in her richest apparel. Autumn brings us the feast of industry when fruit is gathered in honour of work. But with the dark days of winter comes the feast of the heart, when love grows warm and shines bright, when happiness meets us, not in springing flowers or heavy sheaves, not in outward gifts, but where love has hidden her, behind the home door which shuts out darkness and coldness, past unkindnesses and intrusive fear.

To Turn our Thoughts Upward

Christmas is the human festival; its very season compels us to realise that in the long run our greatest happiness is

not found in material things—in fruits of the soil or riches that can be handled and counted, but in the affections of the soul, in kindness, self-forgetfulness, sympathy, and love.

The Yoke of Material Things

In realising this we are lifted far above the range of our ancestors' thoughts. Yet let us not forget how easily we may fall under the yoke of material things. Let Christmas preach against our follies and our prevalent delusions; for in spite of preacher, poet and prophet, in spite of the sad and bitter experiences of life, we, obstinate and stupefied, toil for accumulations of money, large property, dazzling possessions, lordly titles.

But year by year Christmas preaches to us of the joy which came to the manger and the gladness which can belong to the humblest home. A little thought might save us from great and prolonged sorrow. Look round the earth, and say whether of all created things man is not the greatest we know. Where, then, shall man, placed in the garden of the world, find his greatest joy? He may find joy in all things that bloom—in flower and fruit, in grass and tree, in river and sky, but keener than the joys which these can yield is the joy which comes from his own kind. The best can yield best joy to the best. Man can bring to man a gladness which no flower or fruit of earth can bring.

Not therefore in accumulated possessions, but in our fellow-men, will our truest joys be found. The old pictures which show us the mother bending over her Babe, while the wise and rich are unfolding their treasures, preach to us the dear human gospel of Christmas Day. Our best joys can be found, not in riches, but in realising our kinship with the men and women and children who are round about us; for there is more joy in sympathy than in a surplus: life finds its fulness in love, and love finds its vocation in service, even as Christ came, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."



"Who is Mr. Secretan?" she inquired, with a slight, supercilious uplifting of her eyebrows"—p. 131.

Our New Serial Story

Love's Barrier

By ANNIE S. SWAN

SYNOPSIS OF OPENING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE SECRETAN, Vicar of Midcar in Yorkshire, whilst on holiday in Paris makes the acquaintance of Helen Revell. On returning to the parish he tries without avail to forget her. He is poor, and his house is kept by his sister Jane—a very fine, strong-minded woman whom he has scarcely appreciated. Quite suddenly upon their quiet lives comes a bomb in the shape of a letter from Helen Revell to Secretan, asking his advice. He at once goes to Colchester, where she is living with her stepmother, and she tells him of her unhappy and humiliating position. He promptly declares his love and offers her marriage.

CHAPTER IV

A HIGHWAY OF HONOUR

A SUDDEN change swept over the calm of Helen's face. It did not flush; it became instinct with indescribable feeling; her eyes shone, her mouth became tremulous with sweetness. Her heart, quite cold to the man who thus proclaimed himself her lover, was yet touched by his chivalric devotion. For the story she had just told him was surely not one calculated to raise any woman in a man's estimation, though she had not told all.

"You are very good," she said in a low voice, full of intense feeling. "I can never thank you; but it is impossible."

"Why is it impossible?"

He spoke with the quick impatience of the man who will not recognise an obstacle.

"Oh, do you not see? We have known one another only for five days, and—"

"Time is of no importance in such a matter," he interrupted feverishly. "I knew the first moment I saw you that I felt for you what I have never felt for any woman before. I did not try to analyse it, only I know the world was a different world for me during those scanty hours we spent together, and that since they have been over my life has seemed grey, purposeless, altogether impossible. Surely that can have but one meaning."

"From your point of view, perhaps," she said gravely. "But you forget what you propose has two sides. Marriage surely requires that two shall be agreed. Even the most unfortunate of them start, we must presume, on that assumption."

"The circumstances are unusual," he reminded her. "I am honoured beyond all telling by your confidence. It gives me hope that in the future everything would

be easy. I think I could make you happy, and even perhaps I might teach you to care."

She shook her head, and her eyes filled with sudden tears.

She looked at him with a straight, direct simple look.

"Believe me, I shall never forget your chivalrous generosity, never forget that you offered to a friendless and beaten woman the best you had to offer. I am very unhappy, and I do not know which way to turn, but I would not seek the most selfish way out. I would not spoil your life."

"Spoil it! You would be the making of me, and of any man's life," he interrupted once more, with the same strange passion.

"You speak of selfishness. It is all on my side. I press that which I want beyond anything on earth, and I am kept humble by the poverty of the thing I offer. I have told you that I am a poor man. My income is only three hundred a year, and there is my sister."

"And yourself. Don't forget to mention yourself, when you speak of your poverty," she said, with a swift, bewildering smile. "If I know anything of country parishes, and the place of the priest there, you could wed where you liked. You do not need to go afield to seek a wife, even one who would do you so little credit as I."

The words were delicately said, and conveyed a very subtle form of flattery, but Secretan would none of them. For the first time in his life he was really humble. A great love, such as his had undoubtedly become, glories in debasing itself.

"Why will you belittle yourself? You must know how fitted you are to grace any station. And I am something less than a poor man. I am the son of very poor

THE QUIVER

parents, I could never be your equal in any sense."

"Hush!" she said sharply. "You are a good man, and as such are immeasurably the superior of a woman like me. I have tried to tell you something of my life, but I see now that you have not grasped any of its mean sordidness, its ghastly makeshifts, its hollowness and pretence. It has all been very bitter, but it has done more harm even than I thought. It has created a gulf between my life and a life like yours. Believe me, I am right when I say nothing could bridge it."

"I believe nothing of the sort," he said with a quick impatience which caused a slight smile to touch her grave lips. "I believe that you are the wife for me. I want you. I will have you. I'll teach you to care for me, and to forget all the misery you speak of."

His masterful way pleased her. Few women care to be humbly wooed, and the masterful lover succeeds where the suppliant fails. For a moment Helen was silent, greatly tempted. It offered a way out—no humiliating, doubtful way, but a highway of honour, the offer of a good man's shelter and name and love. Accept this, and she righted herself instantly with the sneering, prying world that had played with her good name; she could rid herself at once and for ever of the daily companionship of her stepmother, and score a veritable triumph over her. The temptation was great, but as she glanced at Secretan, admiring the man, she admitted to herself that it would not be fair. For though she had found him a pleasant and interesting acquaintance, she had no love for him; she told herself that her heart was a dead thing which no power on earth could revivify. No, she would not do him so great a wrong. She rose to her feet a little heavily.

"Thank you very much," she said very quietly; "but it is impossible. We had better say good-bye. I shall always remember that you were willing to give a friendless woman the best you had to give. If I appreciated it less, I would accept, but—but you must understand."

He took her hands, and his deep eyes, glowing with the passion of his heart, clave to her changing face.

"Helen!" he cried hoarsely. "I am not asking much. You say you don't care

for me, but I am willing to wait. I will not be impatient, dear. Like Jacob, I can serve seven years for you. Don't send me away! Give me the right to take care of you, to give you a home."

She suffered her hands to remain, and her eyes met his in large, questioning appeal. He was so big, so strong, so kind and good; so different in every way from most of the men she had seen, whose first and last thought had been for self alone. When she compared his chivalry to the cold selfishness of the man who had sworn he loved her, and to whom she had given the firstfruits of her girlish passion, she shuddered. Yet Secretan was no weakling. She secretly gloried in his splendid looks. Beside him, Hunt in all his glory would not have had the best of it.

"You are rushing to your own destruction," she said, with her fleeting smile of pathos. "Don't you see the great barrier that is I don't care? I like you, I respect you—there is something that compels all my confidence—but I don't care, and I shall never care for you, as you say you care for me. It is too great a risk. Tell me—in your experience of the cure of souls have you never come in touch with the tragedy of a loveless marriage?"

"If I have, it has nothing to do with us. I am not afraid. I have enough love for two. Let me try, Helen. I swear I can't go back to the old grey life after a glimpse of paradise has been vouchsafed. Let us be married, and soon. I believe that together we should conquer fate."

She drew herself a little away, and finally, turning completely from him, walked down the path by the river's brim. He did not seek to follow her, understanding that she sought counsel with herself, which augured hopefully for his cause. Somewhere across his mental vision flitted the words "She who hesitates is lost," and a smile followed them.

He admired the straight, lissome outline of her fine figure, the air of breeding, the neat, proud poise of the small head. How commonplace, how ordinary, how altogether different in comparison were all the women he had ever known!

When she came to him again, walking slowly, yet without hesitation, he felt his heart beat almost to suffocation.

Her expression had changed; her face, a



"He did not seek to follow, understanding that she sought counsel with herself."

little white, was set in a sudden determination.

"It is not out of pity you ask me," she said, and there was a difficult note in her voice. "You—you care enough, you say, for both! Are you quite sure of all that involves?"

"It involves all I care for, the right to shelter *you*!" he answered quickly.

"And you will not expect too much? I cannot pretend a love I do not feel, but I would not fail in my duty to you. You are willing to take all these risks, and—and any others that might arise?" she added, her glance swerving for a moment from his face.

"I take all the risks gladly. I am not afraid."

"But you know so little of me! I may be a quite impossible person to live with, and my stepmother the sufferer. You have nothing but my word."

"You forget I don't see you to-day for the first time. There were five days in

Paris, in all about ten hours' intimate talk. Surely that must count for something."

"Ten hours to prepare for a lifetime! You have a large trust. I will take you at your word. I will marry you, understanding that you accept all the risks."

She gave him her hand, and he took it between both of his. She was thankful that he did not offer to kiss her. Afterwards he remembered that it had not occurred to him to do it, though it is usually by a kiss that such a compact is sealed.

"Thank God! God bless you, and may He judge between me and thee," he said in a very full voice. She drew herself a little away, and released her hands.

"Where shall we go now? What shall we do?" she asked feverishly as if she feared to continue the theme. "I feel that I am very inhospitable, but you understand that the house is not mine. I have not even the right to ask who I will to it."

"I quite understand," he answered gently. "But you are going to take me there now."

THE QUIVER

We can perhaps take a roundabout way, so as to bring us there as near the appointed time as possible."

She stood still, looking at him wonderingly.

"You mean it? You will go there, face Mrs. Revell, perhaps tell her what has happened?"

"That is precisely what I am going to do," he answered steadily. "You belong to me now, and the quicker she understands it the better."

"It will not be pleasant for you, and it is not even necessary," she said reluctantly. "She has really no right to be consulted, or to know what is going on. Even if I marry, I should not take her into my confidence."

"I will not leave Colchester without seeing her, and placing the matter on the right foundation," he said quite quietly, but with an equal decision.

"But she has never even heard your name," said Helen in dismay. "The children have told her about the nice man who was always so willing and so clever in helping with the boats, but they don't even know his name. It would have to be explained from the very beginning."

"Well, I think I am equal to that. Don't you think I look it?"

The change that had come over him astonished her, and filled her with a strange mingling of admiration and a little dismay. Now he was the lover triumphant, ready to stand up to the whole world if need be, proud only when she was by his side. If only she had cared, what pride would have been in her heart! How it would have swelled with the joy of living and the ecstasy of love!

"I don't think I realised until this moment just how big you are!" she said with an odd little laugh. "You are quite determined, then, to see Mrs. Revell?"

"Quite, unless you absolutely forbid it."

"Oh, I don't do that. The situation is a little odd—that is all. Couldn't you sleep in the town to-night, and let me explain first to her, before you have the interview? It would certainly be easier for you."

"But I'm not seeking the easiest way. I want to spare you, to make the way as smooth as it can be made, for, after all, you have still a few weeks to live under her roof, but I shall take care that it will be a very few weeks."

"You are very masterful. Do you know that I have been accustomed to order my life pretty much as I pleased? I have never obeyed anybody. Why should I obey you?"

"You will not find me a hard task-master, dearest. In everything, except what pertains to your welfare, you will find me as wax in your hands. But I reserve the right to take care of you in the way that seems best in my sight."

"But I might differ."

"Then we should laugh all the differences away. I'm right in this. If Mrs. Revell is the sort of woman I imagine her to be, she will respect me all the more for taking a bold stand. It will thus be better for you."

"Whatever your imaginings may have been, I am quite sure you have never conjured her up as she actually exists," said Helen, with a faint smile. "I can't tell you how queer I feel, almost as if I had been suddenly called to take part in some comedy for which I had not learned my book."

"I will take the book," said Secretan calmly. "And I think I'm going to enjoy myself very much. How long will it take us to get back to the house?"

"About ten minutes."

"Then let us stop here and talk for another half-hour."

He drew her hand within his arm, and they turned down the path together. Helen felt herself like an unreal person, until he suddenly took her breath away by his next words.

"This is the thirteenth of November. In four weeks from to-day we can be married, and we shall go back to Paris for a brief honeymoon."

She laughed out loud.

"It won't happen. It can't possibly happen! You and I to marry! I take back my words. I won't do it."

"Take them back! Not if I know it; they were too precious, and I'm not going to be tossed back to despair when I've once been on the heights," he observed with that singular calmness of appropriation which secretly amazed and even fascinated her. Helen Revell had a strong personality, which much isolation and introspection had undoubtedly fostered. But now she met one which matched her own; nay, bade fair to overshadow hers.

LOVE'S BARRIER

"You talk as if matrimony was as common as taking a meal. In the place where you live do people accept the deluge like this?"

"They haven't had a chance," he answered grimly. "But why should we wait? The situation is acute. The home is ready, and the sooner you bless it with your presence, the happier its possessor will be."

"But what about the other presence, the sister of whom you told me in Paris?" She cast a quick eye upon his face, but Secretan betrayed no apprehension.

"My sister will rejoice in my happiness. She has often said she wished I would marry."

"That is well in theory. Good sisters invariably speak like that when they imagine themselves secure. But we have to come to details. What will become of her? She would remain where she is, of course."

"Oh, no; that would be impossible and unfair to you!"

"But I should not mind; in fact, she would

save the situation. Don't you see how awkward it would be for us to be quite alone at first? We should be dreadfully afraid of one another, and if she is as good as you say it would be much happier to have her."

Secretan smiled a superior smile.

"You show me every moment how different you are from all other women. I cannot imagine you possessed with the unreasoning jealousy of some women. You are cast in a very different mould."

"It is an inferior one," she said promptly, and a little silence fell upon them. She marvelled at the blindness of the man, who could not see that in pleading for the presence of another in the house she was seeking to build for herself a house of defence. It is only the woman who loves who wants the loved one to herself, who is jealous even of the intervention of the ties of blood. Secretan saw nothing of this. His assumption of knowledge and experience was nothing short of colossal.



"Standing there in the half-light, she looked a remarkably pretty woman, and ridiculously young"—p. 123.

THE QUIVER

"Are you still of the mind to face Mrs. Revell? You can repent, if you like, and take me to a tea-shop instead," she said after a moment.

"I should love that beyond everything, but we must take Mrs. Revell first. When we get her off our minds, and she has driven us forth—shall we say without any refreshment?—then we can descend upon the tea-shop."

Helen laughed again; the pure comedy of the thing amused her mightily.

"Come," she said, slipping her hand from his arm; "and your blood be on your own head."

CHAPTER V

CYNTHIA

THE red glow from the log fire and the subdued radiance which stole in through the curtains of yellow silk mingled harmoniously in the pretty, old-fashioned room, and shut out the bleak greyness of the winter afternoon. A faint swish of silk skirts, a whiff of perfume, followed the opening of the door about four o'clock, and Mrs. Revell, fresh from her afternoon nap, glided in. She was a small creature, delicately fashioned, her long trailing skirts of black giving her a fictitious height. She glanced critically round the room, moved a flower vase here and there, shook up a cushion, and then moving to the fireplace rested the toe of her dainty shoe on the polished steel of the fender, and gazed abstractedly for a second or two into the fire. Standing there in the half-light, with the shadows behind her, she looked a remarkably pretty woman, and ridiculously young. The apology for a widow's cap, just touching with light coquettishness the gold of her hair, seemed an absurdity. But it was immensely becoming. For no other reason did Cynthia Revell cling to it in the third year of her widowhood. The first impression of her face was that of extreme girlishness and a kind of pathetic appeal. But a closer study quickly revealed the hard lines, especially the tell-tale ones about the mouth. It was not a pretty mouth; the lips were too thin, and were apt to compress themselves so firmly as to give the impression of shrewishness and bad temper. One by one these tell-tale lines are drawn on the human face,

and we cannot gainsay their significance, even if we would. The clock struck four; the hands moved again, and presently it was five minutes—ten minutes—past, and her eyes became a little anxious and strained. Did some expected good tarry sadly, some wished-for interruption fail to come? At a quarter past she put out her hand with a little fevered gesture of impatience, and rang the bell, which was answered promptly enough by the neat pageboy who had answered Secretan at the door.

"Bates, you may bring up tea precisely at half past, and I am not at home this afternoon to anyone except Mr. Harold Lascelles."

"Very well, ma'am," replied the cheerful Bates, and was about to go when his mistress spoke again.

"Where is Miss Helen—do you know?"

"No, ma'am, I don't. She went out just after two, and ain't been back. I was a-wonderin' meself, becos of a gentleman wot called soon arter two, and was to come back at tea-time."

"A gentleman, Bates! What kind of a gentleman?"

"Clergyman, ma'am, by his clothes."

"Mr. Paget or Canon Rawnsley?"

"Oh, no, ma'am, none o' them. This was a very big, good-lookin' gentleman, wot was very anxious to see Miss Helen."

Bates added this on his own account. He was not without imagination, and some small sense of humour. Absolutely devoted to Miss Helen, he yet managed to keep his place with a more exacting mistress. Cynthia was unaware that Bates was the bond-slave of Helen, and that he lived but to serve her. If she had for an instant suspected it, Bates would have had his dismissal forthwith. Cynthia was one of the women, by no means uncommon, for whom the servant in the house does not exist, save as an instrument to minister to her need or her convenience. It is a common failing among those who have been raised from some rank akin to the creatures they despise.

"And did he say he would come back at half past four?"

"Yus, ma'am."

"Well, she must see him in the dining-room or the morning-room, tell her. I am at home to no one except Mr. Lascelles. Did he give any name?"

"No, ma'am."



"Bates, you may bring up the tea precisely at half-past, and I am not at home this afternoon to anyone except Mr. Harold Lascelles."

THE QUIVER

"Very well. You have my orders. See that you carry them out."

Bates retired obediently, to forward his preparations for tea.

Bates was a first-class servant, with thoughtfulness far beyond his years, and he owed his training entirely to Helen. She liked the boy from the first moment, when for economy's sake it had been decided to introduce him into the house, and she had taken no little pains to instruct him in his duties. Helen was very fastidious. She could not endure the second-rate or the squalid, without at least making some effort to improve upon it.

Bates could have tabulated the conditions of life in that quiet house with unerring precision. He knew just how it was between these two women, and appreciated every change in the atmosphere, while he appeared but only a pageboy, a little overpowered by his manifold duties. And sometimes the small, loyal soul would retire to his pantry, shaking an indignant fist, and even on occasion dashing away a few passionate tears. He was a daily witness to the torture that can be inflicted on a noble nature by an ignoble one; and, being merely primitive man in the making, Bates' one solution was to wring the neck of the one, so that the other might be freed.

As he passed through the hall the bell was rung and a note hastily pushed through the letterbox. Bates took it out. It was an envelope bearing a regimental stamp, and addressed to Mrs. Revell in a somewhat crude, unformed handwriting. Bates laid it on the salver, debated for a moment whether he should let her wait for it till he was ready to take up the tea-tray, but, remembering how Miss Helen had impressed upon him the necessity for delivering all messages without delay, he thought better of it, and carried the missive to the drawing-room. His mistress had started forward, and her colour was fluttering sweetly all over her face, fully expecting the arrival of the tardy visitor. When she saw it was only Bates with a note, she bit her lip. She did not open it, however, until the lad had disappeared, closing the door behind him. It was a very brief note, and, as her eyes scanned it, her colour rose to a fierce blaze, and her eyes seemed to emit sparks of fire.

"DEAR MRS. REVELL," it began abruptly.
"I've been thinking over our talk last

night, and have decided that the only thing I can do is to leave Colchester. Happily I can do that by the intervention of my uncle, General Graves. I have heard from my people, and I leave to-day by the three fifteen. Thanks awfully for all your kindness to me. I have been a fool, I know, and I can only beg you to forgive and forget.—Yours faithfully,

"HARRY LASCELLES."

Cynthia crushed the letter in her small but strong fingers, and tossed it into the fire. Her breast was heaving with a very real passion, for, apart from the prospect her latest love-affair with the grandson and heir to an earldom had offered, she had liked the young subaltern for himself. It was a cruel blow, and destroyed at one fell swoop the whole fabric of an ambition which had seemed to reach the stars. By means of Harry Lascelles she had hoped and intended to climb far above her peers, leaving all the sordid makeshifts of her widowhood behind. And it was all over! The boy whom she had expected to offer her a serious proposal that very afternoon had escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler.

Cynthia's expression was not very pretty as she paced the room, wrestling with her stupendous disappointment. It was one humiliation the more, because the affair was already the talk of the town, and Lascelles' sudden disappearance would be readily understood. Bates understood presently when he appeared with the tea-tray that his mistress had not been pleased with the communication he had brought. She did not speak to him, and did not even appear to notice his entrance, but he knew the signs. He spread the tea-cloth very deftly, and silently set out the cups, put the muffin-dish on the fender, and immediately withdrew.

Cynthia continued her restless walk, apparently oblivious of the fact that her tea, of which she was very fond, was waiting on the table. In about ten minutes' time she seemed to observe it, and stopped by the table to put a lump of sugar in her cup. Observing that second cup which Bates had discreetly provided, when told that his mistress would only be at home to Mr. Lascelles, she raised it in a sudden fury, and crashed it into the fireplace, heedless of the fact that it was one of a very old and valued set which belonged to Helen.

LOVE'S BARRIER

As the slender things crashed in the fireplace, the door was suddenly opened, and two persons entered—Helen and a tall stranger in clergyman's dress.

"I told Bates I was not at home this afternoon, Helen," she said icily, though her face was still crimson with the fury of her passion. "You must take this—this gentleman to the morning-room, or the dining-room, where they can bring you tea if you ask for it."

"He has come to see you, Mrs. Revell," replied Helen quite calmly. "May I introduce Mr. Secretan?"

There was something unusual in Helen's look and tone, and, naturally curious, Cynthia took a second glance at the man, and was immediately struck by his handsome looks.

"Who is Mr. Secretan?" she inquired, with a slight, supercilious uplifting of her brows. Helen flushed at the rudeness of the question, and sent an appealing glance at Secretan's immovable face.

"If you will excuse me," she said to him nervously, "I will leave you to explain."

"Most certainly; it will be better," he replied courteously, and, walking to the door with her, waited to close it after her.

Her curiosity still further piqued, and in no way averse to being left with the handsome stranger, Cynthia put down her cup and slightly smiled.

"I don't know who you are, Mr. Secretan. My step-daughter is a most extraordinary person. If you know her well, I dare say you have found that out already."

Secretan did not smile in response. He came up the room conscious of being in a somewhat awkward position, and only concerned to get out of it as quickly as possible. He was surprised at the appearance of Mrs. Revell, at her extreme youth, her sweet looks. It was hard to believe that something very different was to be found within.

"I am aware that this is an intrusion," he began, with a singular abruptness which he could not avoid in the circumstances. "I understand that Miss Revell has not told you of our meeting in Paris."

"Oh, no; Helen is very close. I know nothing of her movements. You did meet in Paris, then. Where, may I ask?"

"Only in the Luxembourg Gardens a few times, madam; but some friendships advance rapidly, and I am here to-day to tell

you that I have asked Miss Revell to be my wife, and that she has accepted me."

Mrs. Revell stared at him a full second with incredulous eyes, and then incontinently burst out laughing. Now Cynthia's laugh was one of the most attractive things about her, being wonderfully childlike, spontaneous and infectious. She put up the wisp of her lace handkerchief to her mouth at last, and murmured a word of apology.

"Pray excuse me, but I could not help it. It seemed such a ludicrous idea for Helen to steal out at lunch-time after a most uncomfortable morning and return at tea-time with a *fiancé*. How did it happen? Pray sit down and tell me all about it. I am immensely interested. But won't you have some tea first?"

Secretan shook his head.

"There is nothing to tell," he said quite as abruptly as before, hating the idea of appearing ridiculous before this pink-and-white creature. "I have informed you of the fact. The only other item you need know is that the day is fixed. We shall be married in four weeks from to-day."

"Heavens! and what happens after that? Where do you spring from? What are you going to keep her on? Who will give the wedding? It seems to me it would have been simpler had you run away together from Paris. I can't do anything to help you. Heaven knows there has been talk enough in this vile hole about the Revells. We don't want to give any more occasion."

Here the real woman slipped out. Vexation showed upon her face, the shrewish lines appeared about her mouth, and the pink-and-white prettiness was lost in the haggard reckoning of the woman of the world. Secretan was amazed at the change.

"There need not be any talk, nor any occasion, madam," he replied politely but coldly. "We shall be married in London without fuss, and no one except yourself need know that Helen has gone away. We have no wish to give you any trouble. Indeed, Helen assured me that it was wholly unnecessary to come and tell you, that you would not even be interested."

"Ah, that is just like Helen! She has always been close and unfriendly. I suppose she has concocted a frightful story of my wickedness to you, but I shall not seek to defend myself, I assure you. The step-mother is lawful game, and nobody ever

THE QUIVER

gives her the smallest credit for an ounce of common decency of feeling. No, I assure you I shall not defend myself. Since these are your views—yours and Helen's, of course—may I ask why you are here?"

"I am to blame, if there is any blame," answered Secretan, with the same stinging sense of the ludicrous hanging about him. "I conceived it to be merely courteous to see you before I left Colchester. After all, this is Helen's home, and I wished to show some respect towards it."

"It is a house, but it has never been a home," replied Cynthia, raising the lace trifle to her eyes. "I wish that I had never seen it. I was happy until I encountered the name of Revell. I was left with two hostages to fortune, no means, and a difficult step-daughter, who has misjudged my every action. You should stay in Colchester for a time, and inquire regarding the family. It might be worth your while," she added significantly.

"I shall not do that, madam," replied Secretan, now beginning to wish heartily that he had taken Helen's advice. "Perhaps you will permit me to wish you good afternoon now."

"Oh, don't be in a hurry. If you are going to enter the family, we may as well be friendly. You might find just one or two in the town who would put in a good word for the step-mother; and now you have told me so much, why not a little more? How often did you meet in Paris? Helen is a very cold person—that is, generally," she added as an afterthought. "I really can't conceive how you ever got so far in such a short time. Do enlighten me. Helen and I don't always agree, but really this is most interesting, and I've had a dull afternoon."

In spite of his feeling of awkwardness Secretan could not forbear a smile. The queer side of things struck him, and certainly Helen had in no way prepared him for a woman like this. He had imagined every type but the right one.

"Ah, now, you don't look half so severe," she said, leaning forward with a pretty air of confidence. "Really I wish you would tell me more things. I assure you I am a very friendly person when people take me in the right way. Helen is rather difficult. It is just possible I might be able to help you a little. I am sure it would be my wish to do so, for I bear her no ill-will."

"I don't think anything will be gained for either of us to enter into a full discussion," said Secretan a trifle formally. "Perhaps it will be sufficient to tell you that I am in a fairly good position, and hope to get a better living soon. Certainly now I shall exert myself in that direction, and I will do my utmost to make her happy."

"Will she make you happy?" inquired Cynthia, with a sudden droop of the eyelids. "After all, there is some little importance attached to that. My experience of men has taught me that they expect something, if not a good deal, in the life matrimonial."

Secretan rose to his feet, determined that he would not discuss Helen with this woman, who, with all her specious ways, her air of pretty deference, must be innately cruel and unreliable. Otherwise how could the hard, sad lines on Helen's face be accounted for, the awful bitterness of her utterances?

"I don't want to discuss anything beyond actual facts, Mrs. Revell, and these, I think, have been covered. I have been able to satisfy Helen regarding my position, and as she has accepted me that ends the matter, so far as I am concerned, and she has no legal guardian, it appears. So my responsibility is solely to her."

"I should like very much to know what Helen has told you," she said, clasping and unclasping her hands. "She is not so very young, of course, and there have been other affairs. Did she mention the last one? I am the sole representative of the family, and I have a duty to you."

"Helen has told me all that is necessary," said Secretan, with an increasing coldness. There was a quiet virulence in Cynthia's eye which told that she eagerly sought opportunity to make mischief. He began to move towards the door.

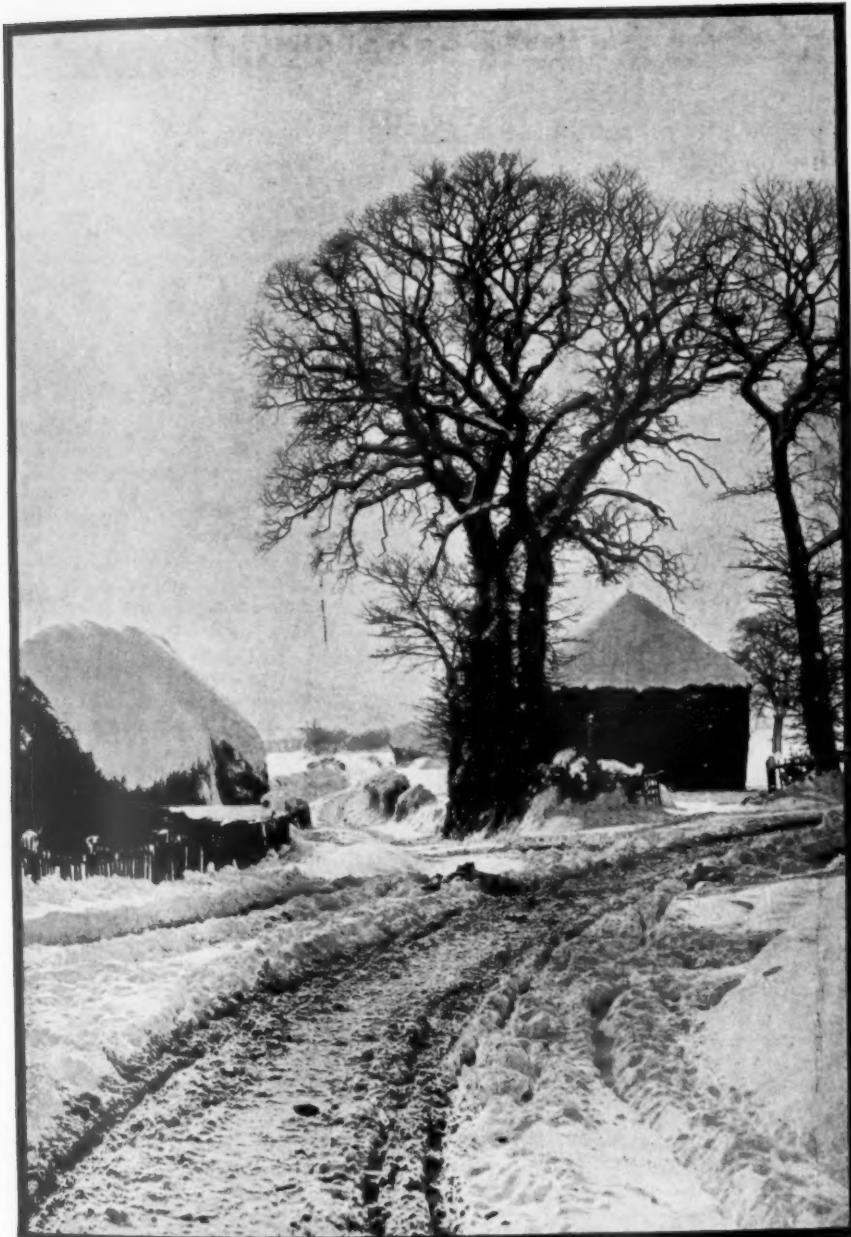
"Must you really go? It is not very friendly. Let me ring for Helen, and have some fresh tea sent up. I assure you I feel nothing but interest in you two. It is really exciting, and a wedding in four weeks!"

"I won't wait to-day, thank you, Mrs. Revell. Good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, then, if you will go. Helen a parson's wife! I can't realise it quite! You must excuse me if I seem flippant, but it amuses me very much."

The echo of her mocking laughter sped him down the stairs.

[END OF CHAPTER FIVE.]



IN TIME OF SNOW

(Nature Study by J. Gale.)

The Peace Child

A Christmas Story

By LILLIAS CAMPBELL DAVIDSON

THE big green car stopped at the front door, the chauffeur sprang down and ran to open the back, where the lady swathed in the pale green veil sat behind a pile of small hand-luggage—dressing-bag, golf-clubs, hockey-sticks, and umbrellas. A chorus of yelps and barks from the dogs on the terrace greeted her approach. One of the long Georgian windows of the big country house flew up, and out stepped a still young and pretty woman in a charming blue frock. The chill wind ran round the house corners, and caught her, as she reached the stone terrace, ruffling the hair over her forehead, and rudely buffeting her skirts. She came running to the front steps, one hand held to the Empire puffs of her coiffure.

"Mercy, Phyllis! what a storm to come in! You must have been half blown to bits. Why didn't you have the car shut?" The other, having descended, and given leisurely orders over her shoulder to the chauffeur and maid about her luggage, laughed lightly—a pretty laugh, yet a conventional one; the kind of laugh that has the mirth somehow left out of it. "Why, I didn't mind! I don't think I noticed. It is so nice to be in the country again that I would have welcomed a tramontana, or a mistral, or a cyclone. What an adorable place you've tumbled into, Muriel! Jack and you must have searched half England over to find it. Georgian and red brick and correct white stone facings and walled gardens, and a pocket-handkerchief lake—I suppose there are pleached walks and sun-dials, and all the proper rest of it?"

Muriel Featherstone had slipped her arm through that of her guest, and was guiding her through the big broad hall, black and white squared with marble pavement, down to the drawing-room, stately and white panelled and Adam fireplaced, where tea waited. She laughed in her turn, but it was a laugh pleasantly exultant and complacent.

"It's rather nice, isn't it? We wore out the pages of six months of *Fields and Country*

Lives before we found just what we wanted. We really were lucky. It's Jack's luck; the same that made him find that gold-mine shouldering his bit of land in South Africa. I don't think we could be better placed. Of course, it's a little strange, just at first, starting life as squire and squires in a stiff English county that looks at you twenty times before it makes up its mind you're respectable. But all the men like Jack—so that's putting it right."

"And all the men and women like Muriel, I expect."

Phyllis Darrell stood for a moment unwinding the motor-veil from her bright hair, and looking round her at the charming room, freshly decorated and furnished in the Chippendale Empire period, with a great wood-fire leaping and dancing, to help the hidden hot-water pipes make the atmosphere warm and delightful.

On a table close to where she stood was a huge framed photograph of an honest-faced, ugly man in shooting rig. Before it stood a tiny china pot of Russian violets. She turned away sharply. Somehow homes and people—husbands and wives who loved each other, and were happy—always gave her that sharp, sudden pang of the heart that was like a spasm.

She dropped into the low chair opposite Muriel, and held her ungloved hands to the leaping blaze of the fire. It was not the charming interior, the plain traces of luxury and easy living, and beautiful surroundings that hurt her, though in these latter days life had been ugly enough sometimes, with its efforts to make ends meet, and its cares and its loneliness. All these things might be hers for the stretching of a hand. There was that man eager and waiting. And yet and yet, for love and a cottage—and a face and a voice lost to her—she would have sold them all, sold them with glad rapture of abnegation. She set her lips hard, and shook herself. What was the good? Why remember?

"It's new land to you, then?" Muriel was passing the teacup she had filled, and

THE PEACE CHILD

Phyllis took it. "Somehow, England's so little; we colonists always seem to fancy you people at home must know every inch of it. Haven't you really ever been in this part before?" Phyllis' head was bent over her cup.

"Never. I have often heard of it. Once I thought I should have got to know it." Something in her tone made Muriel glance at her. But there was nothing of bitterness in the face that bent over the teacup. "Nice neighbours?"

"Oh, yes! very nice. So hospitable and friendly. There are a lot of big houses about, you know, and some of them are lovely places. The nearest to us, now, Hylton Court—it's perfectly lovely."

The hand that held Phyllis' cup shook ever so little. Some of the tea splashed out, and ran into the saucer. She did not meet the other's eye.

"Is it so near? I didn't know. I hadn't thought. But, of course, that stands empty. I don't think it is ever let, is it?"

"Not let—no. But it's occupied this winter, all the same. It's just opened. Mr. Hamilton is coming back to live there. They're tired of being abroad so long, my house-keeper tells me. They mean to be here for the future; I haven't called yet. I haven't met them, and I don't know who ranks as the oldest resident—since the place belongs to them—though they've been so long away. Why, Phyllis, what's the

matter?" For the hands shook so sharply now that the tea ran down in a brown torrent over the pretty tweed frock. Phyllis set the cup down on the table. Her face was suddenly like ashes.

"It's nothing, nothing at all," she tried to stammer. Then, seeming aware how vain such flimsy protest was, she stopped short in it. "Yes, it is something," she said, desperately. "Everything. Much as I love you, Muriel, I should never have come down to stay with you and Jack if I'd dreamed this would happen. I wouldn't have come within a hundred miles of Hylton Court if I had dreamed it wouldn't be standing



"'Mercy, Phyllis! what a storm to come in! You must have been half blown to bits.'"

THE QUIVER

empty ; if I hadn't had an insane, a senseless, an imbecile hunger to set eyes on it."

" Why, Phyllis ! "

" That woman, Mrs. Hamilton—you couldn't know, of course, but she was my own cousin, my first cousin. She's the only person I think I ever hated—that I could never forgive, if I were on my death-bed. She took the man I cared for from me. But for her, I should have been living at Hylton, the happiest woman on earth, for the last ten years. She robbed and despoiled me, and lied to him and to me. Let me tell you, Muriel. All my old friends know. They think it's long over. They try to make eligible marriages for me—rich men, and all that. You are a new friend. You don't even know my people. It's so many years since I spoke of it to a living soul, I think it would be a consolation somehow to tell you. I ought to tell you why you must not call at Hylton while I am here ; why I must not be asked to meet that woman.

" He—Victor Hamilton, and I—we were engaged to be married. I was happy—frantically happy. There—we won't speak of that. I find I am not able. Alice, my own cousin, Alice Chaytor, she deliberately made up her mind to supplant me. She tried to make mischief—that was no use. Then she forged a letter. She showed it to Victor ; she made him believe I had deceived him, that I didn't care for him, that I was false and heartless. Then she flung herself on him, told him she loved him ; appealed to his honour ; charged him with having made her care for him. He was desperate. I don't know how it all came about, but it was half fury with me, half recklessness, I imagine. Before I had recovered the stun of his letter, I saw his marriage to her in the paper. Then hard on that followed an accidental meeting with him—they were just leaving England ; she was always delicate. He broke down at the meeting ; he told me the whole truth, and we had an explanation. He knew he had been tricked and swindled. But he is a good man ; he knew he had made her his wife, and he had to make the best of her. I am not a good woman. That day made me a wicked one. I swore never to look into her face again—if she were dying and I could save her life for her—swore never to forgive her, if it lost me my own chances of heaven. I never have taken that oath back—I never shall.

And now I find myself, by a miserable chance, almost shoulder to shoulder with her ! "

" Oh, Phyllis ! " Her friend was gazing at her with moist eyes. The passion, the strain of torture in the voice that told the story, were terrible to listen to. " But you need not, darling. I haven't called—I don't mean to yet ; you shall not come across either of them. I don't even know if she is down here yet. They said he had come down to see that the house was ready."

Miss Darrell gathered up the furs that lay strewn about her. " I think I'll see my room now, if I may," she said. She had checked the excitement in her voice, but a red spot burned in either cheek, and her hands were still shaking. The sting of telling that dreadful old story again was harder to bear than she had anticipated. " And we won't ever talk of it again, will we ? I can surely keep out of their way for the week I'm down here. And I may never come again, dear. They want me to marry a rich American, and go to live in California. If I could manage it, it might be better, mightn't it ? " with a laugh—a hard laugh. " But I don't know whether I can attain to it." They went together to the room where her boxes and her maid waited, and they only talked commonplaces as they went. But long, long after the maid had gone, and the hostess, Phyllis stood at her window, looking across to that straight line of old trees inside the park wall that she had dreamed of ten years ago, and now viewed with such torment of stormy feeling.

More guests came late that evening. The house filled fast. The next day was given over to shooting-parties and outdoor lunches, and a big dinner in the evening. That night the weather grew colder. Snow fell in silent, soft flakes. In the morning the park trees were powdered, and the ground beneath was hidden an inch deep, and sparkling. People came down to breakfast feeling it correct to shiver, though the sustained atmosphere inside the house was somewhere akin to midsummer.

There was talk of motoring over to the market-town after lunch. Phyllis kept silence. When she was appealed to by her hostess, she begged off, and said she wanted a walk in the snow. She had not had such a pleasure since she made snowballs. She

THE PEACE CHILD

refused all offers of escort, and was mysterious over her destination. To tell the truth, she had a secret desire to go and look at the little old Norman church she had known so well by description in the old days, where she had used to picture herself going Sunday by Sunday with the man who was never to be her husband.

The light snow had left the leafless trees, but it still lay white and untracked across the path on either side of the avenue as she walked briskly down it. The terror that had shaken her on her arrival had passed by. What if she did come across the new residents at Hylton? She would pass her cousin by as she would have passed a stranger. She would find even a satisfaction in setting her face like a flint, should Alice show a desire for recognition. As for him, no, no! She would rather they did not come across each other. The old days were dead, but she could not forget. Men were more fortunate.

The old brown church, with its squat tower and spire, lay down the high road a long way. It was closer to Hylton than to the house just bought by the Featherstones. Nobody had been to the church since the snow fell; that was evident. It lay a little back from the road, and the

path to it was smooth and flawless. A little side gate stood slightly open. There the snow carried marks, and Phyllis bent her own steps in that direction. Strangely little marks they were as she looked down at them—the uneven small footsteps of a child, straying in zigzag fashion. She pushed

the gate wider and went in to the snow-filled churchyard. A smothered voice met her ear—a voice with accents of dismay and distress in it.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! It's so stiff! And I's shoes is fulled wiv it!"

She turned the corner by the big yew, and saw struggling along the path before her a mite of a girl, in a Dutch baby-bonnet, with bare red arms showing outside the pinafore. A flushed face full of distress was turned back over the baby shoulder at the sound of a follower; and the tiny snow-clogged shoes were staggering desperately against the drift that lay across

the path and made a mountain to such minute feet. Phyllis' heart gave an odd thrill of amusement and interest and compassion.

"Why, you've lost your way, darling, haven't you?" She hurried up, and knelt down in the soft wet snow to throw a fond, protecting arm round the soft little shoulders. "You didn't want to come in here. You



"Oh, to have had a child like this!"—

p. 138.

THE QUIVER

must have thought it was the gate to your own house, didn't you? Where's mother?"

The wee thing shook a pale golden head. The delicate features were flushed with cold and exertion. "I wanted my muzzer!" she said. "I was tummin' to look for her. I fordotted ze way. You show me."

"You perfect angel!" Phyllis took her up in her arms, and made her way with her to the porch. There she sat down and held the mite on her lap, gloating over her. If things had been as they had been dreamed, she might have held just such a baby in her arms, and heard it call herself mother. The mother-hunger that is in the souls of all real women rose and shook her with its desire, its longing, its suffering. Oh, to have had a child like this! To have felt soft lips to hers; held baby feet in her hands to warm them, as she was doing now; put back golden straying hair from a soft, pure forehead! Why had some women all these things, while other women were left starving? She pressed the yielding tiny form against her breast convulsively.

The baby smiled up at her gravely, confidingly. It was a friendly mite, and used to appreciation. With one chill finger it gently felt the long gold chain at Phyllis' neck, from which swung the enamel pendant. Phyllis caught the finger and the plump hand to her mouth, and rained on them kisses.

"What did you want mother for? Had she come out and left you?" This was not a cottage child. The little bonnet was of fine satin; though cottagers dressed their children, nowadays, in satins and silks and laces, and only the children of poor gentlefolks went plainly and cheaply clad. The baby swung the chain, and laughed at it.

"Wanted to say my Kissmas 'im. Nana teached it to me."

Christmas! Phyllis gave a faintly guilty start. She had forgotten all about Christmas. It was the time when happy families met, and glad homes were aglow with holly, and people who had children hung up their stockings. When one lived alone with a crabbed old aunt and uncle, one thought as little of those things as one could.

She pressed her lips against the little hand again. "Say it to me. I'd like to hear it. Perhaps mother is busy." It would be like a woman who had a child

like this, a priceless dear possession, to be too busy with silly inanities to listen to her baby's sweet lisping.

The mite raised her head, and fixed her eyes on the fretting of the stone arch above her. She piped out in a clear, high voice, more or less in tune, a line or two:

"Ark! ze 'eral' angels sing
Glory to ze new-born Kin'!
Peace on earf, and mercy mild,
Dod and sinners yeconciled!"

"What's yeconciled mean?" She turned her eyes down to Phyllis' and slyly hugged the neck she clung to. Phyllis' eyes rested on her with adoration.

"Oh, it means being friends, forgiving people!" vaguely.

"Ess, I knows! Nana says peoples kiss and be friends and never mind what dey did to hurt dem. I'm doin' to kiss kitty—she scratched me. Who's 'oo goin' to kiss and make friends wiv?"

"Nobody, I'm afraid." A sharp recollection of the woman she hated crossed Phyllis' heart. She half rose from her seat, unthinking. The child clung to her the closer.

"Don't let me fall—tumble!" Phyllis laughed, and snatched her to her.

"As if I should! Oh, you darling! Do you think your mother and father would give you to me for my little girl? You should have everything on earth you wanted."

The baby looked serious. "Me don't know! Fader wouldn't let me! But Nana won't, either, 'less you kiss and make friends wiv somebody."

"There isn't anybody but one. And I can't forgive her. I don't mean to."

It was absurd to talk to this baby as if she could understand. Yet somehow there was a relief in saying it. Phyllis had not calculated the effect. The little face clouded, the eyes grew frightened, the lips trembled.

"Oh, you've *dot* to fordlive dem, and kiss dem, and be friends!" she whimpered, distressfully. "Nana says 'oo's *dot* to!"

Signals of sorrow were terrible to Phyllis in a thing so small and so adorable. She bent down to the quivering face, but it withdrew from her.

"Oh, I san't kiss 'oo 'less 'oo makes friends!" wailed the baby voice. It was apparently a nursery code of retribution. Phyllis, overwhelmed at this sudden clouding

THE PEACE CHILD

of the face of her idol, was almost ready to promise anything.

"Darling ! Don't ! You mustn't cry ! For goodness' sake ! There, I'll try, anyhow. Won't that do ? I'll think about it. I'll see if I can."

The baby face considered, with a look of sagacity. "'Oo's got to try *velly* 'ard. When 'oo does it, I'll kiss 'oo.'" Phyllis made a dart at her, but the face hid itself, and she was only able to find the shoulder and neck with her lips. A baby gurgle of delight went up at the new game. Phyllis strained her to herself with ecstasy. "Oh, you greatest darling that ever was ! I wonder if your people wouldn't give you to me ? Are there many of you at home ? Many little girls and boys ? Perhaps they wouldn't miss just one of you !"

"Dere's only me !" said a voice smothered against her shoulder. "Dere isn't any more babies. Perhaps somebody else's dot more of zem."

"I don't want other babies ; I want you, just you yourself. Won't you come away and be my little girlie ? I'll give you heaps and heaps of toys—yes, and a pony," desperately. For the sake of securing a creature like this, one would wear shabby frocks, and go without a maid to dress one, and live in a back street in Bermondsey !

"I'll tum if 'o'll kiss and make friends," with infantile insistence. This baby was as callous where her own relatives were concerned, apparently, as other young persons of her age and capacities.

It was too absurd, too ridiculous. Yet, the look of distress and reproach on this baby face made one feel, for the first time in ten years, a certain shame where one had, till now, upheld a proud resolution. Hatred, revenge, hardness of heart—were they as sweet, after all, as a little child's soft kisses ? For the sake of a voluntary turning to the heart that cried out within her at that moment, Phyllis could have found it in herself to forget that past she had brooded over and nursed within her memory, rolling her hatred under her tongue like a sweet morsel. To have that baby face smile, feel those red lips on her own, one might almost forget how imbecile it would be to relinquish the hate of ten years for so trivial a pleading. Something within Phyllis Darrell wavered and hesitated. There are angels in heaven who belong to little children,

and whose eyes for ever behold the face of the Maker of peace and forgiveness. Was it one of those now urging within her ?

"Give me the kiss first, and I'll see," with artful duplicity. The baby head shook and the face turned away further. One groping hand caught in the chain round Phyllis' neck. With an instant change of interest the baby tugged at it.

"Me's dot a chain, too. And a pretty, pretty picture on it !" She lifted her head from the sheltering shoulder to grope in the neck of her pinafore. Glad of the diversion, Phyllis assisted. Their faces were close ; those soft lips were too alluring.

"Kiss me, and I'll do anything, anything !" Phyllis breathed in a gasp.

The baby crowed delightedly. "Make friends ?"

"Yes, yes ! Only kiss me !" And the baby kissed her.

Oh, that kiss ! It raised the heart of Phyllis like a benison ! She hugged the mite again and again ; the chain at her neck swung loose, with a little miniature dangling from it. With a careless hand, Phyllis turned it over, then shrank back as if a serpent had stung her. There, from the round gold circle, smiled up at her, smooth, false, triumphant, the face of the woman who had wrecked her life—her cousin, Alice Hamilton !

"Who—who are you !" she panted sharply, as if the wee thing could understand her. The baby caught the swinging miniature, and shouted with laughter. "It's muzzer, my muzzer ! Isn't she pretty ?"

For a second or two the old grey stone porch, the great clothyard yew, and the churchyard spun round Phyllis. With a first instinctive movement she had almost thrust the child from her lap. Alice's baby ! Alice's ! Then her second instinctive impulse grasped her the tighter. The baby had hailed her as its friend ; come to her, loved her, kissed her. Powers of heaven and earth should not tear that dear fact from her ! Again she started, for the baby fingers were thrusting the miniature close to her face, and the baby voice was crying. "It's my muzzer ! Kiss her ! Kiss her !"

That was too much ! Yet, what was it all worth, after all—that long-cherished animosity ? The child of the woman who had wronged her turned to herself—time



"She was face to face with Victor Hamilton."

had wiped out the sorrow. She had given her word to the little child. She had bought a trusting kiss with it. How could she repudiate the promise she had made? With a sense of inward loathing she let her lips brush the glass above the face that smiled back at her exultantly. Something in the trivial act seemed to set loose unknown forces within her. The peaceful churchyard, where all anger lay burnt to ashes, the old grey church above them, the little child on her knee—what were human wrongs and resentments here, in the light of heaven's judgments? She got up, and raised the child from her lap to her shoulder, holding her there with a fond arm. "Come, baby," she said. "I must take you home. Your people will be anxious about you. I'll carry you up to the door, and give you back to Nana."

"Take Irene back!" Irene! Even the very name was a token! Yes, she would

of awkward embarrassment. Then she tried to rally her forces.

"I found your little girl wandering in the snow," she said. "I'm just taking her back to her mother."

"To her mother!" How strange his manner was! Why did he look at her so oddly? "Did you not know? Had you never heard? I thought you must have been told it."

"Told what?"

For all answer he pointed silently to the marble cross beside which she was standing. Her startled eyes read the new black lettering: "Alice, wife of Victor Hamilton, aged thirty." The date was thirteen months ago. He held his hand out; and, dazed, she took it. "I have been looking for you ever since we came, but I could not find you," he said. "Something has led you here." And she echoed dizzily, "It was a little child. 'A little child shall lead them!'"



take peace back to the house where her thoughts of anger and resentment must brood no more; where she had promised to shower forgiveness. She walked out of the porch, bending to let the baby bonnet escape the low round arch where the ground beneath had so risen. She turned the corner by the great yew, and behold, she was face to face with Victor Hamilton!

There was a stifled exclamation, an instant



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The Policeman as Philanthropist

GOOD WORK QUIETLY PERFORMED BY THE MAN IN BLUE

By ERNEST H. RANN

"Our police force . . . is a body of men who, though distinctive in their character from all others, as members of the public service must necessarily be, are yet related to the people whom they serve by ties of intimate personal association which are not to be found in any other country in the world. The policeman, in London, is not merely the guardian of peace: he is an integral part of its social life."

"THE TIMES," December 24th, 1908.

tells it, as his chattering teeth allow. Father dead, mother struggling to keep the home together in a neighbouring slum, eldest sister taken to drink—and worse. Barely half an hour ago sister had returned, much the worse for liquor. There was a stirring of angry tongues, a shaking of angry fists, and suddenly the flashing of a knife and the shrill cry of "Murder," hearing which the boy had fled in terror, to find his only *friend*—the policeman.

Yes, his only friend, the policeman.

MIDNIGHT in a great Midland city. The bells are ringing the advent of another Christmas Day, but their merry sound is sadly out of keeping with the lowering sky which threatens a snowstorm, with the muddy streets, and the icy wind that whistles and tears along as though warmth was never to be felt in this world again. Suddenly there is a sharp cry of pain and the patter of little feet along the flagstones—little bare feet, you can tell that by their splash-splash in the cold and wet, and a dwarfed, ill-clad, ill-fed specimen of humanity stands before you. His only garments are a ragged shirt and a pair of knickerbockers held up by a single brace. No hat, no waistcoat, no coat, no stockings, no boots. He shivers as the bitter wind shrieks once again, and huddles himself into himself, although there can be little warmth in his fragile body.

What is his story? Little by little he



"Come along; I'll see you right"—p. 142.

THE QUIVER

As he finishes his pitiable tale a constable appears, recognises the little chap, realises the situation without a single question, and with a cheery, inspiring "Come along; I'll see you right," takes the little waif under his wing, on the road to safety and comfort, wherewith to begin his Christmas Day.

This is no fancy picture. It is an actual experience, which might be multiplied by the dozen in every city in the Kingdom. The policeman is the children's friend, the good fairy who looks after the waifs and strays of humanity that throng our streets, gives them a wise and kindly word in season, puts them in the way of getting better clothes and better food, saves them from moral ruin, and starts them on the path that, in time, will lead to the goal of good citizenship.

Few of us realise what a policeman's duties really are. To the public mind he is often and only associated with the most sordid side of human nature and with the worst specimens of human kind. The burglar and the assassin are perforce his intimates, and on these his energies are bent with a view to securing their detention in the prison cell.

This work, however, needful though it be, represents only a fraction of the policeman's services to civilised society. More and more it is being recognised that prevention is better than cure, that it is far better to prevent a boy from becoming a thief than to punish him when he has committed a theft; that society can best be reformed, not so much by tracking down and punishing evildoers as by guiding the footsteps of the little ones in the ways of cleanliness, orderliness, and honesty.

The police may be a terror to criminals—I hope they are—but in nearly every city and town of the Kingdom they have



(Photo: Clarke and Hyde.)
LOST: A SCENE IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

come to be regarded as the friends and protectors of the young, who look to them for help with the trust and confidence born of their experience of kindness in the past.

Clothing Destitute Children

Let me state one fact, simple but significant. The police-aided scheme for clothing destitute children, which was originated by Captain Henderson, the Chief Constable of Edinburgh, has been either wholly or partially adopted in Birmingham, Bolton, Cardiff, Chester, Coventry, Dublin, Dundee, Glasgow, Halifax, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northampton, Plymouth, Preston, Rochdale, Salford, South Shields, Smethwick, Stockport, Swansea, Wakefield, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, and Worcester.

Dundee, Glasgow, Halifax, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Northampton, Plymouth, Preston, Rochdale, Salford, South Shields, Smethwick, Stockport, Swansea, Wakefield, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, and Worcester.

And it must be remembered that the work treated by the associations is in every single case outside the official duties of the police; it is a voluntary and gratuitous effort in the cause of the little ones, inspired by the kindly heart that so often beats beneath the blue tunic.

Obviously it would be impossible in the course of a short article to mention a tithe of the good deeds performed by the man in blue. They tell me at the offices of the International Christian Police Association—an excellent institution that for twenty-five years has offered a home to travelling members of the force—of officers on night duty who frequently share their supper and the warm coffee with which they are supplied with the outcasts of the streets. Not long ago a policeman on duty on the Thames Embankment rescued from the river a girl who was intent on suicide. Her case was desperate, for without money, friends, or home the black, swirling waters seemed her only refuge. A friend she found in

THE POLICEMAN AS PHILANTHROPIST

her rescuer, who took her home, where his wife fed and clothed her, and where she stayed until a situation could be found for her. None of these good deeds are "according to regulations"; they are undertaken simply in that spirit of doing good for preventing evil which is permeating every police force in the country.

I could tell of an amusing case in which a young officer received the confidences of an aged widow, who complained that, if she went out shopping to provide for her lodgers, her sewing, on which she partly depended for a living, must go undone.

"I'll look after the sewing," said Robert, as he sat down, being off duty, and the widow went forth. When she came back she found half a dozen towels had been hemmed by the obliging officer, whose fingers were dexterous than they appeared.

But it is towards the little ones, as we have said, that Robert's heart opens widest. In Liverpool the destitute children of that great riverside city find a good friend in the policeman, and every Tuesday and Wednesday during December, January and February they and he may be found at the clothing dépôt in Islington. The whole force is enlisted for the purpose of looking after the little ones, and the keynote of their work is struck in the standing order which states that :

"If a Police Constable sees or has his attention called by others to a child who seems to be insufficiently clad, he will question him or her, *being careful to do so kindly*, so as not to let the child think it has got into trouble."

"*Being careful to do so kindly.*" Is there not a world of meaning in the phrase? The whole circumstances of the child's

life are investigated, and if the child be a suitable claimant he is handed over to the Association and clothed by them. The clothes are not given, they are simply *lent* to the parents, and all brokers, pawn-brokers, and secondhand dealers are warned against receiving them. After the child is clothed the police keep their eye on him, to see that he is enjoying the advantages which they and the Association have awarded. The Head Constable of Liverpool, to whom I am indebted for many particulars, tells me that nearly 4,000 children were last year clothed on the recommendation of the police.

"Widows in their Distress"

The most unquestionable cases for relief are those of widows, and I have before me that of a poor woman who earned six shillings a week in a bag warehouse. She supported herself and her child on



"Half a dozen towels had been hemmed by the obliging officer."

THE QUIVER



(Photo: G. B. Alban.)

PATRICK GAFFEY (MUTINY VETERAN) RELATING HIS EXPERIENCES.

this meagre allowance, without receiving a farthing from the parish, and the agent of the Association found her "sober and respectable." A clear case for help, if ever there was one, and it was readily granted. Another was that of a shoemaker, who had been out of work for eight weeks, and dependent, with his wife and family, on the charity of other people. The rent alone was 5s. 6d. per week. Their sad state was brought to the notice of the Association, and three children, aged respectively ten, five, and three and a half years, were provided with warm garments.

A Friend of Children at Liverpool

One of the best friends the Liverpool children ever had was Police constable William Campbell, of whom it was once said, "His

heart is as big as a pumpkin, and full of honey." Young and old in the city knew him, and in the neighbourhood where he stood on point duty he was consulted in every case of difficulty and distress. One of his feats was to take a party of forty old people on a day's excursion to Eastham Woods, and the youngest member present had passed his sixty-eighth birthday. If a child were lost, it was Campbell who restored him to his friends and his relations; if father were ill, it was Campbell who seized an odd half-hour off duty to go and read to the invalid; if brother Bill were out of work, it was Campbell who gave the earliest "tip" where a "job" could be found.

One day this stalwart constable was found sauntering quietly along one of the streets leading from Breck Road, with a little child toddling along a few yards in front of him.

"What are you doing here, Campbell?" he was asked.

"I'm taking this lost child home. She didn't know where she lived, so I told her to run home to mother, and I know, if left to herself, she will find her way there in time."

And find her way there she did, thanks to Campbell's timely inspiration.

Campbell not only gave his time to the service of the little ones, but his money as well. He is an expert canary breeder,



(Photo: T. Taylor.)

POLICE CONSTABLE CAMPBELL AND SOME OF HIS LITTLE FRIENDS.

THE POLICEMAN AS PHILANTHROPIST

and every penny of profit out of this hobby was treasured up until he had sufficient for a trip to the country for a few old friends or neglected little atoms of humanity. To their great grief, Liverpool children know him no more, as ill-health has compelled him to live at Harrogate, but in thought he is still often with those in whose service he laboured for so many years.

St. Helens is another Lancashire town where policeman and philanthropist are synonymous terms. The work is difficult, often discouraging, and Mr. A. R. Ellerington, the Chief Constable, frankly confesses that out of the 300 persons of the unemployed, loafing, and criminal classes, who have been helped to clothes, money, and situations during the last four years, a certain percentage have turned out failures. But, on the other hand, the workers can point to many cases of success. One is that of an old Indian Mutiny veteran, named Patrick Gaffey, who for years has been clothed by the police, and through their report, sent up to the War Office, his pension was increased from one shilling to eighteenpence per

day. In another instance a youth was charged with stealing iron. His garments were ragged and filthy, and generally he presented a most unkempt appearance. During a remand for a few days his hair was trimmed, and a complete outfit of clothes was purchased for him *by the police*. Eventually the Chief Constable withdrew the charge, and passed the youth on to Mr. Holmes, the police-court missionary, who succeeded in getting him into a home.

St. Helens has no permanent Children's Clothing Club, owing to lack of funds, but the police are never backward in providing boots and clothing for deserving cases, in relieving absolute want from their own pockets, in making collections to enable youths and others found wandering to return to their homes, and even sharing

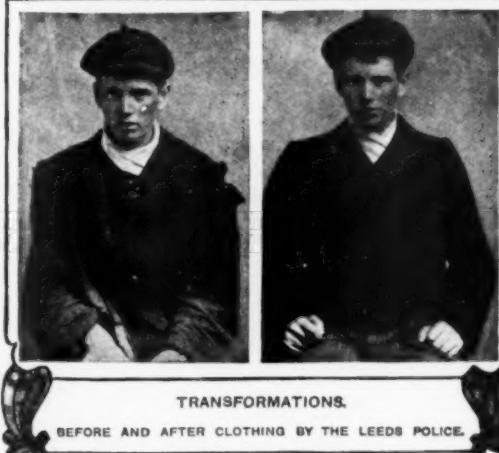
their suppers with the outcast and the unfortunate whom they encounter during their nightly patrol. Good deeds all, and the better for the secrecy with which they are done.

Good Work at Leeds

Over the county border, in the great city of Leeds, the police force bears its



A RAGGED URCHIN IS TURNED INTO A CLOTHED CITIZEN



TRANSFORMATIONS.

BEFORE AND AFTER CLOTHING BY THE LEEDS POLICE

THE QUIVER

part nobly as blue-coated philanthropists. The Chief Constable has spent more than thirty years in the public service, and he believes that "it is doubtful whether any more generous class exists than policemen, as a body, with regard to any deserving charitable matters to which their attention may be directed."

In Leeds the police make collections to send poor children to a holiday camp, and to assist the unemployed, while the promoters of Lifeboat Saturday and of the Salvation Army Self-Denial Week never look to them in vain. Cricket matches are played, and the proceeds divided among local charitable institutions, and by this means alone a sum of £1,000 has been raised; while £100 per annum is contributed towards the maintenance of the Police Orphanage at Harrogate.

One of the most helpful branches of police work in Leeds is the rescue of young girls at a time when, if not checked, they are likely to take up a life of professional vice. Some of the girls are of most respectable parentage, and it is no uncommon thing for the Chief Constable to receive a heart-breaking letter from a mother in a distant city, giving particulars of a girl who has left her home; and the joy of the parent when the girl has been restored to the family circle is the only—but it is a sufficient—reward that he and his officers receive for their splendid services.

Although there is no organised police-aided clothing association in Leeds, ragged little waifs and strays are always sure of Robert's kindly help; and the four

pictures which we give on page 145 bear eloquent testimony to this unofficial philanthropy.

Clothing Scheme at Birmingham

Birmingham was one of the first cities in the Kingdom to take up the noble work of providing for necessitous little ones through the agency of the police. The former Chief Constable gave his hearty support, and this has been continued by his successor, Mr. C. H. Rafter, who tells me that, in addition to help clothe the children, the police do many acts of kindness by rescuing homeless girls from the streets, by taking charge of lost children until claimed by their parents (no fewer than 1,729 in 1908), in regulating child trading on the streets, and in finding situations for boys who would otherwise lapse into idleness and crime.

It is with the clothing scheme, however, that we have most to do at present. Mr. W. J. Clarke, who has been hon. secretary of the Association for the last fifteen years, and was the first to suggest



(Photo: Whitlock.)

MR. W. J. CLARKE, HON. SECRETARY OF THE BIRMINGHAM ASSOCIATION.

the police-aided scheme for Birmingham, is eloquent in his praise of the help given by the police. From the beginning of the work no fewer than 10,265 separate families have been dealt with, embracing 28,563 children, who have received among them 140,539 garments and 27,422 pairs of boots. It is not too much to say that this noble work would have been impossible without the cordial, sympathetic, and discriminating co-operation of the police. It is the constable's eye which first detects the ragged child in the street; it is the constable who follows

THE POLICEMAN AS PHILANTHROPIST

him to his home, discovers the causes which have led to his destitution, and arranges for his being clothed and shod; who afterwards watches that the boy is wearing the clothes and reaping the advantage of the kindness which has been bestowed upon him.

Restoring a Widow's Health

Let me give one instance of such work in the great Midland city, of a widowed charwoman, who had been told by the parish doctor that she must stay in bed for some time. It was good advice, no doubt, but as likely to be followed as the recommendation to take a Mediterranean voyage. Her sole income was 5s. per week from the parish, 2 lbs. of sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of tea, and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of rice. When the police superintendent paid his first visit, there was half a loaf in the cupboard, but not a bit of wood or coal was to be seen. The eldest child was ragged and badly shod, the other four children were at school—fit subjects, one might say, for mental training. Out of his own pocket the superintendent relieved the immediate needs

of the family, and the Association took charge of the case until the poor mother was restored to health.

The Poor at Sunny Brighton

Brighton occupies a unique position in this philanthropic work. What, you will say, poor children in healthy, sunny Brighton, needing food and clothing? Yes, many of them needing it badly, and the wind does not bite less keenly because it comes from the sea, and purity of air is rather a drawback when you are lacking the food to satisfy the appetite which it creates. For Brighton has a population of about 130,000, nearly all of them dependent on the crowds of visitors who year by year seek health and pleasure there. The town is entirely lacking a factory, it has no staple industry, and the employment available for unskilled workers is limited and precarious. The police, led by the splendid example of Mr. W. B. Gentle, the Chief Constable, find plenty of work in helping the destitute. Last year no fewer than 850 children were clothed and 50 girls fitted out for domestic service. In the majority of cases



(By permission of "The Daily Chronicle.")

FEEDING THE WAIFS AND STRAYS AT BRIGHTON.

THE QUIVER

the clothing is made by poor women, who, failing this mode of earning a living, might have the terrible alternative of parish relief. In every instance the help was most timely and valuable. Mr. Gentle told me of a case where a father, mother, and four children were found one Saturday night hungry and cold, with empty stomachs and no prospect of food for the morrow. This was the opportunity of the good fairy, in the shape of the policeman, who relieved their immediate needs, clothed the little ones, and ultimately found work for the parents.

In another instance a police superintendent found a situation for a motherless boy who was just leaving school. The difficulty of proper clothing cropped up, however, as the father was far too poor to provide it, but with the help of the Association the lad was "rigged out" and set in the way of earning an honest livelihood.

In a third case the son of a widow in reduced circumstances became a shop apprentice, but his earnings were small, and he was unable to keep himself in clothing suitable to his position. In his dilemma he applied to the Association, and help was readily forthcoming, for it was felt that timely aid was better than allowing the boy to grow discouraged and discontented.

"Until you work among them," said Mr. Gentle, "you cannot tell the amount of mental suffering endured by the respectable poor."

He pointed out to me that particular attention is given to poor girls because, even when they desire to enter domestic service, too often the parents are so poor that they cannot provide the necessary outfit, and thus their daughters are in danger of drifting on to the streets to

lead a life of shame. This is the chance for the policeman as philanthropist, and in the course of a single year as many as fifty girls, the fitting out of whom is undertaken by Mrs. Gentle, have been provided with an outfit, a box to keep it in, and a situation into the bargain. The reports from their mistresses show that the majority of them are doing well.

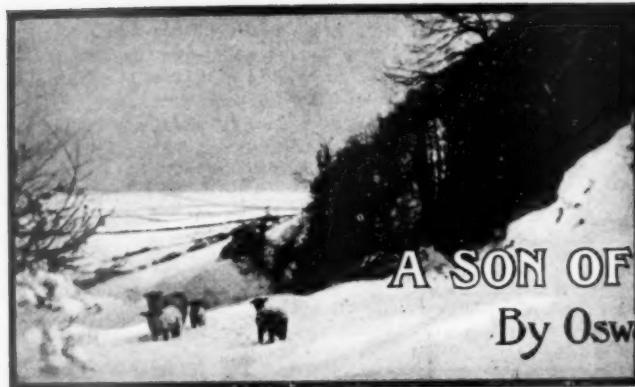
I asked him about the moral effects of the scheme, and whether it tended to pauperise the parents.

"Not in the least," said Mr. Gentle. "The parents recognise the value of the aid given, and are anxious to keep the child up to the standard of cleanliness and appearance which the police have set. When we started the work the children who came to be fitted were none too clean, but nowadays they know the meaning of soap and water. And to tell you how poor they are, I may mention the case of one boy whose only covering consisted of a brown-paper shirt. The scheme has a distinct moral value, for the children clothed by us not only feel that they must live up to their more respectable appearance, but they come, by knowing the police to be their friends, to have an increased respect for law and order. The policeman-philanthropist, as you call him, is engaged in the making of good citizens, and that from material which otherwise would shape for lawlessness and crime."

Christmas is here once more; winter is with us again, when nakedness has to be clothed and hunger appeased; and surely, when our hearts warm with charitable Christmas feeling, we should remember the Man in Blue, whose work in the cause of the poor is making for a stronger, a nobler, and a better race.

THE CHRISTMAS "CASSELL'S"

THE Christmas "Cassell's" will be found to be a storehouse of good things, to which stories and articles have been contributed by many of the best known and most popular authors of the present day. These include a long complete story by Lloyd Osbourne, who, as Robert Louis Stevenson's step-son, collaborated with "R. L. S." and short stories by such mastercraftsmen as Leonard Merrick, E. F. Benson, E. Nesbit, Dolf Wyllarde, the Baroness Orczy, Hilda Cowham, A. St. John Adcock and others. Articles on such seasonable topics as "The Christmas Tax," "The Good, Old Fashion" are contributed by Basil Toller and F. Raymond Coulson, and other interesting features include an article on "The Pleasures of Mountaineering" by the Right Hon. James Bryce, the British Ambassador at Washington; "Secrets of Ye Stille Roome," in which will be found many valuable old recipes; and how to grow some novel "Plants for Christmas decorations." A special feature of the number is the eight beautiful coloured reproductions of Royal Academy pictures, suitable for framing.



A SON OF RENOWN

By Oswald Wildridge

The Story of a Rich Prodigal

STRANGERS idling through the dale wondered greatly as to who David Branthwaite might be when they chanced to meet him, for he was one of the men who could not be overlooked. Many were the mistakes the wayfarers made in their efforts to classify him, but, so far as is known, not one of them ever imagined him to be the doctor. If luck was theirs, and the fact was revealed to them by a native, they left the hill-country bearing some strange stories which were apt to make the men of the towns think better of the heart of humanity. They were also given the desire for a word with David Branthwaite and a shake of the hand.

It must be confessed that in many matters of address and conduct the doctor fell short of the standard set up by the profession. We never saw him arrayed in black, save for a burying ; his preference in material ran to a serviceable heather-mixture, in cut the shooting costume met his fancy best ; when he made his rounds he drove a horse shaggy as any of the mountain ponies, and we never met him without his dog, the most tousled otter-hound in the country-side. It is also on record that when he attended the quality at Dalefoot he addressed them as "Mr." and "Mrs." and dealt with them in the tongue of the faculty ; but among his own people he had a strong liking for the dialect, and probably the happiest hours he knew were those spent by the glowing fire of a farmhouse kitchen when storm and darkness trapped him on the hills. In this way he learned many secrets, was given a

glimpse of many skeletons usually hidden behind well-locked cupboard doors, and because he was a strong man and likeable he became a helper in a multitude of cases for whose treatment the lancet and the medicine bottle had no application.

Conversation on these occasions ran in grooves. Andrew Matterson had a taste for politics, and an hour with the doctor and the master of Nepghyll we counted a better thing than a night in the House of Commons ; at Sampson Lowther's we had theology that would have greatly astonished the bench of bishops ; but up at Grayrigg the talk ever turned on the adventures of Robert Steele, the lad who acquired the secret of money making so completely that while he was still young he had become a man of power.

One day, when Robert was beginning to make a name for himself, David drove five miles out of his way so that he might carry a newspaper to the sheep-farm on the shoulder of Great Howe ; afterwards, as soon as they saw him mounting the brow, Jacob and Margaret knew that the doctor had news of their boy for them, and those were never-to-be-forgotten moments for the doctor when he read how "the chair was taken by Mr. Robert Steele," or how "Mr. Robert Steele proposed the adoption of the balance sheet," though the greatest event of all was when he revealed to the old folks the fact that their own son had actually "addressed the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the deputation."

It was shortly after this that certain

THE QUIVER

suspicions arose in the doctor's mind concerning Robert Steele, and the day after the sheep-farmer and his wife completed the greatest exploit of their lives, a surprise visit to London, he dropped in for a "crack." As a man of observation he discovered at once that the adventure had ended in disaster.

Margaret was clearly ill, Jacob confessed to feeling a "laal bit tired," but the thing that troubled the doctor most of all was that new hardness of their features and their chilling lack of response. Both of the old folks had grown like the rocks that encircle the dale.

London, they explained, was such a wearying place, it lived so quickly and made so much noise; and their weariness was the mark that London had made. Margaret felt terribly sorry for the people who were compelled to earn their bread and butter there, and she was sure that a single day's work in London must be vastly harder than a whole week of sheep-tending in the dales.

Robert? Oh, yes, he was quite well! His house? It was a wonderful house; there were none like it in the dale, except the castle at Dalefoot where his lordship lived. Yes, Robert had plenty of servants. Margaret had counted four, and she fancied there were others; and he had silverware that must be worth a fortune, and carpets as soft to the foot as the breast of Great Howe, and pictures that surely the greatest painter-men in the land must have painted. And that was all. They were both very tired, and they would never go to London again.

"And quite right, too," the doctor snapped; "you'd have been better employed if you'd gone to Tom Jenkinson's sale," and in a trice old Jacob and he were discussing the prices which Tom had obtained for his sheep and cattle, this being Branthwaite's way of giving a new turn to an undesirable conversation. He had little doubt as to what had befallen the old couple, and his suspicion became a certainty at the end of a month, when Margaret took to her bed, smitten by a malady for which medicine has no remedy. This was one of Branthwaite's hard cases; setting a bone or battling with a fever was child's play to treating a breaking heart.

"She's beating me herself," he declared, when the time for faithful dealing arrived,

"and Jacob, my man, I'm not going to hide the truth from you any longer. The mistress is failing, and I'm helpless. As long as a body wants to live, it's one half the battle, but Margaret's just letting her life go by." He laid his hand on the farmer's shoulder and looked him squarely in the face. "Jacob, I'm in the dark—she kens what it is that ails her, and you know it as well. I'm not wanting you to tell me anything that belongs to yourselves alone; but as between man and man I'm making it plain to you that mebbe your wife's life is lying in your hands, and if you can name anything that'll rouse her it's her only chance."

They were out in the croft, standing by the doctor's shabby, time-worn gig, and this was Branthwaite's last word. He was never the man to beg for a confidence or to wait for one, but as he placed his foot on the step Jacob Steele laid a detaining hand on his arm.

"Bide a minute, doctor," he said; "I'll tell you. You mustn't let her slip. I need her mair than ever. I canna face the loneliness without her. It's for the laddie she's grieving. He was all she lived for; but—he—he's slipped away; the thing that's known as pride has stolen him, and now she's a mother without a bairn, and she seems to feel that she has nothing left that's worth living for. You'll mind hoo we were aye joking aboot the busyness that wouldn't give him time to come to the dale to see his father and mother, and hoo we settled to give him a grand surprise by going to London ourselves and dropping in on him just as if we'd called for a cup o' tea. We shouldn't have done it. He's done famous, has Robert, but—he's one of the men who can't stand corn. He's climbed so high that he's passed oot of sight of his starting point. Man, it was terrible—a heartbreak—we saw it at the very first. We had a gey hard job to get intil the hoose at all, for there was a silly man body who wanted to know if we'd brought cards with us, an' then he wanted oor names, and it was boddersome to drive it intil him that in t' dale a friend may always count on an open door, and that all he'd got to do was to tell his maister that a man and woman wanted a word with him."

"But you got your word at last?"

"Ay. We got it. Robert bundled us through intil a bonny back parlour. He

A SON OF RENOWN

was frightened to death that any of the servant folk should know that the woman with the plain speech and old-fashioned clothes, and the man who was a sheep-farmer, and looked like one, were just his oan father and mother. I'll spare ye the rest. There weren't any words. We just came home. And since then Margaret's been

mak' o' pride than the sort my lad has found among his money bags and his honours. Robert Steele has chosen his own track—and he may tread it. If the old home and the old folks and the old ways are not good enough, he may just make shift with the new ones. I've put him oot of my life. That night—after we got back fra London



"He was frightened to death that any of the servant folk should know that the woman with the old-fashioned clothes and the man who was a sheep-farmer were just his oan father and mother."

going doon the hill. She's scorned by her oan bairn, an' she isn't caring aboot living."

"And yersel', Jacob?"

This was one of the signs that the doctor was touched. He nearly always dropped into the dialect. Jacob Steele stared steadily away to the Pike o' Blisco, glowing in the sunlight like an upreared spear of gold; the doctor knew that his heart also carried a jagged wound, and that speech was hurting.

"I'm a prood man myself," he answered, at length; "and I'm thinking mine's a better

—when I barred the door—I barred it against him for ever."

"Does Margaret ken that?"

"We've never had any secrets."

"What does she say?"

"She agrees wi' the justice of it. We both mean to be hard. There's nothing 'll ever wipe oot the slight. And, doctor, there's surely a chance for her—you'll not let her slip."

"It's what ye might call a complicated case, Jacob." David's voice could be terribly dry when he chose to make it so.

THE QUIVER

"I don't know that I've ever had one like it. There have been times when I've suspected the breaking of a heart, but I'm pretty certain that I've never been asked to prescribe for one that was suffering from hardness as well. Anyhow, you may count on me doing my best. It's no ordinary treatment that'll set her on her feet, and no physic; but while there's life there's hope, and I'll bid ye good-day." And with that he was up in the gig and driving out of the croft.

His next visit to Grayrigg was a long one, and, according to the things that Margaret has related, his talk had little to do with sickness or its treatment. Still, it was amazingly effective, for when Jacob came down from the fells he found his wife sitting up in her bed, new colour in her cheeks, her eyes once more ashine. She was wonderfully ready to talk; she who had been so content to lie still day after day with rarely a word upon her lips; and while Jacob marvelled at the change she began her revelation.

"I'se a wicked woman"—of all the women in the dale we had none more gentle, not one more motherly—"and I've only just found it out. Like the man in the Book, I've turned my face to the wall and been ready to give up my life, bit noo I'm wanting to live—if oanly to put the crooked things straight."

Jacob laid his hand caressingly on his wife's shoulder. "Eh, my lass," he muttered brokenly. "This just caps aw—God's mighty good—an' this'll be a bit o' David Branth'et's work."

"He's spent a gey long time with me today"—Margaret was full of her tale—"and noo I see things as plain as print. He's been telling me of a woman body somewhere—he wouldn't name no names, though I expect she's one of his patients. She's got a son who's one o' t' biggest wastrels on earth; he's neglected her till she's known the want o' bread, and abused her as though she'd been his worst enemy, and there's hardly one o' t' Commandments he hasn't broken; and yet, when she's had a penny to spare she's spent it in buying something for herself and she's passed it off as a present fra her son, so that the folks who kenned him when he was a bit laddie shouldn't think ill of him."

"My word, lass, but that was fine."

"Ay, wasn't it? An', Jacob, before he went the doctor asked me aboot—aboot our laddie. An' it wasn't so much the words he used as the queer way he handled them that set me thinking, and I've got it on my mind that the folks in the dale may be blaming Robert for the thing that's such a heartbreak to you and me. And I canna stand it. What if he is ashamed of his mother's old-fashioned ways? I can bide it. What I can't bide is that anybody should treat his name with disrespect, or point the finger of scorn at him."

"It's oanly his wages, the thing he's earned. Didn't we agree that as a matter o' justice—"

"Ay," Margaret broke in, "we spoke in haste and pride. An' I'm not so sure aboot justice now. I'm beginning to think that when fathers and mothers have dealt with mercy they'll have neither time nor taste for justice—they can leave that to folks with harder hearts."

"And what is it you want me to do?"

There was rebellion in the tone; and while Margaret pleaded for the reopening of the door Jacob listened with his jaw tightly set, his eyes harbouring an uncompromising frown. From the bedside he turned to the window, and looked with unseeing vision on the mountain heights. Memory painted for him another picture, of that scene in London with all its black indignity, reminded him of the sacrifices of fatherhood and motherhood, and the baseness of the return. Margaret was asking more than he could grant. Time enough to relent when the prodigal came home and begged for mercy.

His mind made up, he returned to the bedside of his sick wife, and there he discovered that decision rested with the mother and not with himself. In her hand Margaret held a pair of baby shoes, holed and frayed by use and years. They were her crowning argument.

"D'y'e remember them?" she whispered, a passion of love in the tone; "they are his—the first pair your money bought for him." She placed them in his hands. "Ye mind how proud you were. The little feet soon grew tired in them days, Jacob, an' ye were aye ready to hoist the bairn on your shoulders and help him on the way. He needs you yet. For the sake of the little feet

A SON OF RENOWN

that wore them, laddie—for the sake of the feet, you'll open the door?"

This was verily Margaret's hour. The triumph of mother love was complete. Handling the shoes with reverence, Jacob restored them to her keeping. "You shall have your way, wife," said he. "If Robert likes to lift the sneck, he'll find the door open, and—and I don't think it's ever been bolted yet."

With this he hurriedly left the room, but half way down the stairs inspiration checked his steps and sent him back to his wife's bedside. "I'll be away to Bransty in the morning, and ye shall have the best black silk that money can buy; an' if twolk like to think that it's a bit present fra Robert—well, we'll just let 'em think."

II

IT was a fierce winter that fell upon the country that year, and the men of the dales have marked it in big, bold lines on the calendar that memory keeps. Long before the autumn winds had made an end of their dirge, Scawfell was wearing his winter cap, and when the news came over the fells that Black Sail was blocked we knew that we were in for a hard time. Bitter were the winds that assailed us, blinding were the sheets of snow, and as the end of it all that tempest for which, when we tell of it, we have no prefix of degree. It is not known to us as "The Great Storm," but simply as "The Storm." When even the railway arches on the coast line outside the dale were filled from base to crown; when the hollow wherein Margery Bannister lived was buried so that nothing was left of Margery's cottage save the chimneys; when Robert Musgrave lost one hundred and fifty sheep; when every dyke in the lowlands was hidden, and at Burnfoot every household had to dig its way out.

As David Branthwaite drove with difficulty through the defile into which the dale narrows at its head, he could hear the shepherds at their work upon the heights gathering in the flocks which had fled to the hills. Give our mountain sheep their freedom, and they will never wait to be buried in the valley; they prefer to face the tempest on the topmost crags. Muffled and dim, the cries of men and the baying of hounds

drifted down the steep fell-sides, and after a brief struggle the doctor surrendered.

"It's not a bit o' use, Meg," he bawled to his storm-battered horse; "I mustn't be sitting in my gig in comfort when a helping hand may be wanted up there, so we'll just see how Jacob Steele's getting along." Half an hour later Meg was snugly housed in Jacob's stable, and her master was hard at work rounding up the stricken flocks; and when, after the labour of hours, the last of the sheep had been penned, the doctor was fain to agree with the farmer that he "would nivver win through to The Green," and that a night at Grayrigg must be his portion.

With the passing of the hours, the storm grew in fury. Shrieking, howling, roaring, the wind swept through the passes; high overhead it billowed from rock to rock with the boom of thunder, and the snow was driven before it in blinding sheets, and swirled and piled about everything that gave it hold until the drifts were built higher than the height of a man.

Seated by the wide-mouthed kitchen hearth, Margaret made a fine pretence of knitting, but her needles lay mostly idle in her lap; and, as for Jacob, he was for ever stirring about, now pacing the floor, but oftenest going out into the porch to note the movements of the tempest. "I've been thinking I heard a cry across dale," he explained after a longer absence than usual, and, although he was sure it "was nowt bit a shepherd call," he was off again the moment he had got the chill off his finger-tips. Almost immediately he was back again with a shout that brought his wife and Branthwaite to their feet. "It's true, doctor, it's quite true. There's some poor body out yonder in t' snaw, and I'm off to seek him."

"Ay! And I'm coming with you. This is likely to be a doctor's job." David was already wrestling with his greatcoat. "And we must have Jossy Ferguson along wi' us, and we'll give Lanty Armstrong and Ben Dodgson a call if we can get near their houses."

Heavily coated, wrapped also in thick shawls and armed with iron-pointed sticks, the three men turned speedily out into the tempest, Margaret's benediction in their ears: "I'd bid you bide if I dare—but it's a mother's bairn that needs ye—and God bring ye safely back!"

THE QUIVER

"I'm none too sure about my bearings," Jacob shouted as he whistled his two sheep-dogs across the croft, "but t' cry seemed to come fra down there"—he pointed straight across the dale—"somewhere Birker way. Dogs 'll be a fine help if he calls again."

It was a vain hope, however. All the world seemed to be full of sound, but it was the raving of the tempest; the clamour of distress was hushed. And rescue also appeared to be impossible. Out on the fells the snow was piled in drifts, huge and deep and dense, and even the winds appeared to be clouds of snow, so thickly massed were the sweeping flakes and spikes. One man on such a night would have been helpless, but foot by foot the doctor and his comrades fought their way. At the end of an hour's desperate struggle the dogs gave them a new lead; and there, under the shelter of a mighty rock, they came upon the wayfarer, over whose body the storm was spreading a winding sheet of spotless purity. Branthwaite knelt beside him. A pause of awful solemnity followed. The doctor burst into a passion of speech.

"It's you and me against death, lads. Here, Lanty, get a grip o' this bottle. Now then, the rest o' ye, give me a lift with him. We'll have him on his feet, and if we don't shake life intil him it'll not be our fault."

Now, with regard to the other happenings the farmer of Grayrigg has a somewhat hazy recollection. He remembers that many orders were given by the doctor, and that all were faithfully carried out, but the fact that has fastened itself on his mind is this—that when at last the stranger spoke he uttered the one word "Father," and that afterwards the voice of the doctor cut loud and exultant into the thunder of the storm, "Eh, man, this is mighty. It's your own laddie you've saved this night."

He is also apt to make light of that second struggle, when upon a stretcher made of coats and staves, they carried the prodigal across the breast of the fell, but never will he forget the face of his wife when her son was given back to her. "Love," said he to the doctor afterwards, "is just past telling."

Margaret met them at the door, standing outside in the driving snow. Lanty Armstrong had given her the message which David had sent so that she might be spared a harder shock. When he saw her, darkly drawn against the flood of light, the doctor

roared that other message for which she waited in trembling hope. "Ye're laddie's right, Margaret; his mother's nursing is all he wants."

Himself he was not so sure, but it was ever Branthwaite's way to beat back despair with the offer of hope until defeat could no longer be concealed. Far into the night they toiled in the old-fashioned bedroom, just the three of them, with now and again a maid showing a frightened face; the doctor with his coat off, sleeves rolled up, perspiration gleaming in beads upon his brow; the others waiting, helping, praying. Thus the new day entered, and, as the grandfather's clock downstairs struck three, Robert Steele came back from the Land of Silence.

Full of wonder, his eyes wandered from point to point. They settled at last upon his mother; he whispered her name, and then "Father." Margaret stooped and kissed him.

For a spell the room was silent as the moors on a sultry day in June. It was a movement by the doctor that broke it, and when Robert looked on the grizzled face of David Branthwaite memory sprang into fulness of life.

"I remember now," he said. "I was coming home—and the storm beat me."

"That'll do, my laddie," the doctor growled. "You've had enough storm for one night. You may get to sleep now."

But Robert was not to be silenced so easily, even though speech was a labour. "I was coming home—it was the letter that dragged me. I couldn't stay away."

Between the father and the mother a glance of perplexity was exchanged. The doctor busied himself at the table, bending low over his task. Margaret passed her hand gently over her son's head. "We've sent you no letter, my bairn," she said.

"No. It was the doctor. I've brought it with me. I'm going to keep it for ever. He told me he was glad I'd found wealth and fame. Afterwards he told me that my mother had been ill, but I wasn't to worry—she was doing nicely. And then—he praised me for—for the devotion I was showing by sending her such beautiful gifts. And I'd given her nothing but shame and neglect! He also told me how my name was ever on your lips, yours and my father's. How through all the dale I was being held up as a model of what a son ought to be. He said



"The cry seemed to come from down there."

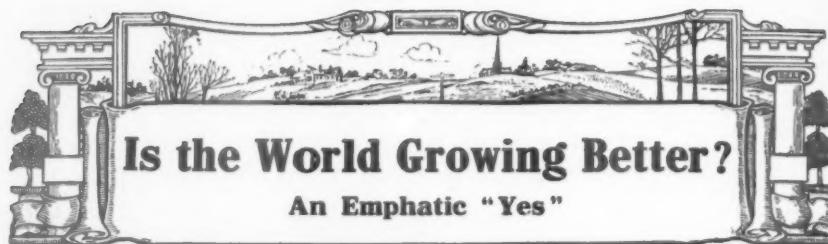
something besides about the saving grace of a pair of baby shoes, but I don't know what he meant. I understood all the rest—saw how you were trying to shield my name—it broke down all my empty pride. I didn't want money any longer—I wanted to look into my mother's face. I didn't want fame and the applause of men; I wanted to grip my father's hand. There was nothing else that counted. So I came home. They tried to keep me at Dalefoot, but I couldn't stay. I'd simply got to get home, and I lost the track—and now I'm going to sleep—a lad again—in my father's home."

Margaret sank upon her knees by her son's bedside, her face buried in her hands.

Gently the doctor tip-toed from the room, and when Jacob followed he laid a heavy hand on the farmer's shoulder and growled a fearsome threat. "Man, if ye say but one word o' thanks, I'll strike ye off my list."

Still it was Jacob to whom the honour of the last word fell. "I'm not going to thank ye, David Branthwaite," he said, "for that's a thing that's beyond the power of tongues. And I'm not thinking that Margaret 'll put ye to confusion, but I'se warrant that for the rest of her days your name 'll not be missing fra her prayers."

And as the doctor himself has since observed, "What mair can a man desire?"



By the Rev. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.

THE slow progress of the Kingdom of God is one of the sorest trials of Christian faith. In the earliest days Christian folk expected the immediate return of Christ, and with His return the creation of the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. But as the days and years passed, and no Christ came, the faith of the Church staggered and faltered. And as the faith of the Church faltered, her foes began insolently to triumph over her and to make a mock of her "blessed hope." "Where is the promise of His coming?" they sneered. And as to their dream of a new earth, they bade the Christian look abroad upon the world, "for from the day that the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." "There is no change or amendment," they said; "all this expectation of a returning Christ and a renovated earth is a cheat and a delusion." And the worst of it was—what these mockers said seemed true. It did look as if the dream of a changed world was a delusion. Things were going on in the same bad old way they always had done. There was no sign of right's triumph. Wrong seemed just as firmly seated as ever upon the throne. Till at last the taunt of the mockers and sceptics found a response in the hearts of the Christians themselves, and they became more than half inclined to surrender their hope of Christ's return and a redeemed world.

Since those earliest days the Church has passed through many a similar season of depression and discouragement. We are passing through such a time just now. All our work seems to go for naught. We seem to make no impres-

sion upon the forces of evil; indeed, evil seems to gain upon the Church. For all our efforts the world does not seem to get any better, but evil men appear to wax worse and worse, until we too are tempted to say, in Clough's words, that "The struggle naught availeth."

I had a letter not long ago from a friend of mine who gives himself unreservedly to every good cause, and who spends himself lavishly in the service of men. It was written shortly after the defeat of a great moral cause at the hands of a gigantic vested interest. The letter was like the wail of a disappointed and almost despairing soul: "I am sick at heart," he said. "The great causes for which I have lived and laboured seem all to fail. The toil and trouble of forty years seem to have gone for nothing. We make no progress. I begin to ask sometimes if it is all worth while." And others, beside my friend, are often tempted to ask, Is it worth while? Like him, we are tempted to cast ourselves down beneath the juniper tree and complain with Elijah that we have laboured for naught and in vain.

Is it all in Vain?

But is it for naught and in vain, after all? Is it a fact—as we are sometimes tempted to say in our bitterness—that things do not get any better? Is it a fact that the Kingdom is no nearer to-day than it was a hundred or a thousand years ago? Christmas has come round again, reminding us once more of Christ's promised Kingdom, and of that happy time when there shall be peace upon earth and goodwill amongst men. What about the Christmas message and the angelic prophecy? Is it a delusion? That we are

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER?

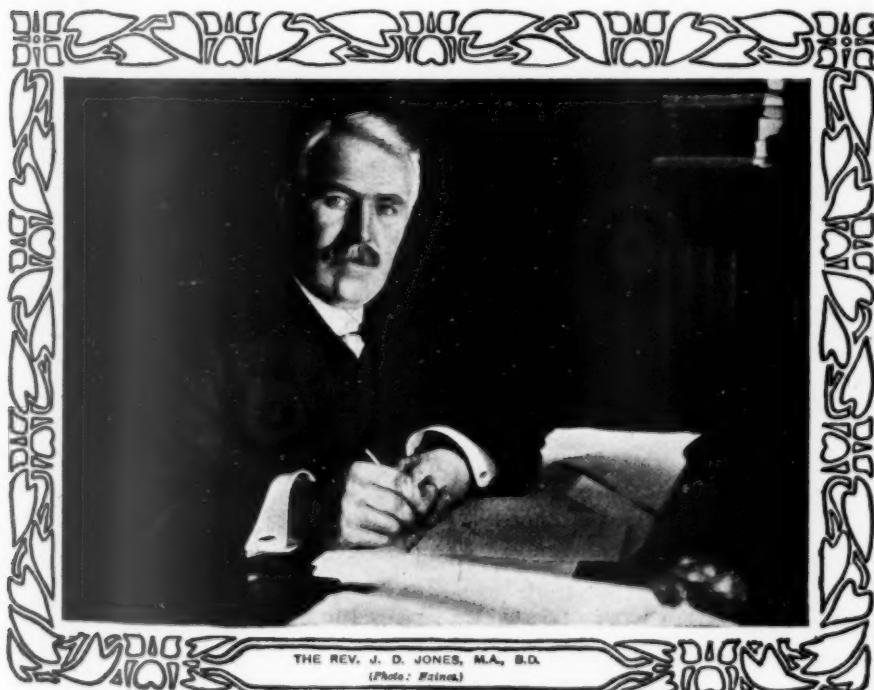
a long way off the golden day of peace of which they sang is apparent enough to anyone. But the question is not, whether we are still a long way off the ideal, but *whether we are any nearer than we were?* As Christmas after Christmas passes, do we find ourselves any nearer the realisation of the angels' prophecy? Is the world really growing better? It may be that if we set ourselves patiently to examine the facts we shall find, in spite of all discouragements and disappointments, ample reason for cheer and good hope.

We must Take the Long View

The first remark to be made about this question, "Is the world growing better?" is, that if we want to answer it satisfactorily we must take the long view. In the case of growing children we can register the advance year by year, but not in the case of the progress of the world. If the question were, "Has the world grown better in 1909?" I would not undertake to say. For this simple reason—that

the course of moral progress is never a straight line. Advance is never uninterrupted and continuous. The history of the moral progress of the world would be much more truly represented by a zigzag than by a straight line. The great causes advance to their victories and final triumphs only through reaction and reverses. So that it is impossible by the examination of a single year to tell whether the world is making moral advance or not. To discover the general drift and tendency of things we must take the long view, we must study history in broad stretches, we must cast our eye over the centuries. When we take that broad bird's-eye view of the world's history we shall find no difficulty in returning an emphatic, unmistakable, unhesitating "Yes" to the question, "Is the world growing better?"

Well, now, how shall we test the question? I propose a very simple test. Paul defines the Kingdom of God as "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." If the Kingdom is really coming, if the



THE QUIVER

world is really growing better, we shall see signs of advance in these three respects: (a) In the matter of justice, (b) in the matter of peace, (c) in the matter of the joy and happiness of living.

Progress in Justice

How stands it then, first, with this matter of *justice*? Obviously, justice is not yet fully established; great and glaring wrongs still exist amongst us. But make what qualifications and observations you please, it remains undeniably true that our world has made enormous strides in this matter of justice. Let me give an illustration or two. I begin first with *slavery*. I look back upon the world into which Christ came, and I find the practice of slavery practically universal. The fabric of ancient society was to a large extent built upon slavery. Now slavery is the final and supreme injustice against the individual. It is a complete denial of the most elementary of human rights. It is the degradation of a man into a thing. The slave's time and powers, his honour, his very life, were all at his master's disposal. The whole system of slavery was a ghastly and hideous outrage upon justice. But from this modern Christian world of ours slavery has vanished. The Western nations have washed themselves free from its stains in blood. Slavery and the slave trade are alike repudiated and abhorred amongst us. This elementary right of every man to his own personal freedom is an axiom in all our thinking. And we have gone further far than the mere abolition of slavery. There has been an immense enlargement of freedom and privilege. The whole tendency of modern times is toward "equality of opportunity." I compare the working man of England to-day with the serf of England in feudal times, with the slave of Rome in early Christian days, and I know that from the point of view of *justice* the world has grown enormously better.

The Treatment of Women and Children

The same fact may be further illustrated by the almost incalculable change that has taken place in the treatment of *women and children*. In the ancient world women and children had no rights. To all

intents and purposes they were the goods and chattels of the husband and the father. The progress of the centuries has been marked by an ever-increasing recognition of the rights of the woman and the child. Woman to-day occupies a position of honour and privilege; the little child is the special *protégé* of the law. I compare the position of women and children to-day with the position of women and children long ago, and I know that from the point of view of justice the world has grown enormously better. Time fails me to tell of the increasing equity of law and the ever-growing impartiality of its administration; of the legislation passed to secure reasonable conditions of labour in factories and mines—all of them making for fair play as between man and man. But no one can consider these things without being persuaded that from the standpoint of *justice* the world has made real and substantial progress.

Progress in Peace

How stands it, in the second place, with regard to *peace*? It looks, at first sight, as if there, at any rate, my case hopelessly breaks down. We live in the midst of wars and rumours of wars. The nations of Europe are armed to the teeth, and this year of grace 1909 has witnessed an acceleration in the mad and wicked race of armaments. And yet I am going to maintain that in respect of peace the world is a better place than it was nineteen centuries ago. Let me illustrate that statement in one or two directions. Take the case of *private war*. Away back in the Middle Ages private war was a recognised practice, and within the bounds of the same realm men were wont to settle their quarrels by an appeal to arms. And during these incessant private wars the peasant and the poor suffered unspeakable things. To such a pitch, for instance, had things come in France in the tenth century that a Church Council could declare that "the cities of France were depopulated, the monasteries burned or destroyed, the fields reduced to solitude, so that it could be truly said that the sword had pierced to the nation's very soul." Well, private war, with all its horrors, has been utterly and finally abolished. Side by side with private war I will put piracy

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER?

—which is a form of private war at sea. In the old days no ship worth seizing was safe. In these days the ocean is as safe as Piccadilly. Piracy has been sternly repressed and stamped out. And, lest all this should seem unreal because so remote, let me remind you of things that have happened within the limits of the past half-century. First of all, the actual practice of war has been humanised, especially in the matter of the treatment of prisoners and the institution of the Red Cross Society for the succour of the wounded. Secondly, war is being increasingly recognised as a ghastly and hideous evil. In the old days men flew to arms at the slightest provocation; now the strongest nations hesitate before they make their appeal to the dread arbitrament of the sword. Thirdly, there is a steadily growing tendency to refer national disputes to arbitration courts. The Hague Conferences, and the Arbitration Tribunal those Conferences set up, are enormous strides in the direction of peace. And when I think of all these things, then, in spite of bloated ship-building programmes, I thank God that I can say with a good heart that even in the matter of *peace* the world has been growing better.

The Joy of the World

How stands it, in the third place, with respect to the *joy and happiness of life*? I do not for one moment wish to close my eyes to the misery and wretchedness and suffering that unfortunately are all too prevalent among us. I do not want to forget the slum or the unemployed. I do not want to ignore the fact that in this England of ours at this very time there are thousands of people living in cold and hunger and nakedness. And yet, in spite of it all, I am prepared to say our world is gradually becoming a better place, a happier place, to live in. For during the centuries there has been a steady growth in the spirit of kindness and love. The Christmas season witnesses a wonderful outburst of human affection. But the spirit of kindness is not a flower that blooms only in Christmas week. It is—shall I say?—an everlasting flower. It is always operative. It prompts all through the year to deeds of kindness and love. Think of our hospitals and our almshouses,

and our orphanages and our refuges—all of them meant to alleviate suffering and to make life a little easier, especially for the poor. Think of the swift response to the cry of need, even though the cry come from a far-off Messina or a still more remote Armenia. Think of a fact like this, that while since the middle of the nineteenth century wealth has grown enormously in England, the money contributed to charities has grown twice as fast. No one can think of the children, the sick, the old, the toiling millions of our land, without realising that life is a far happier thing for them than it used to be within the memory of many still living. There is more pity in the world, there is more kindness, there is more love, and consequently there is more joy. I compare the old, hard, inhospitable world with our modern world, with its tenderness towards children, its care for the poor, its gracious ministries to the suffering; and, in spite of every distressing fact, I know there is more love in the world, and that therefore, in respect of happiness and joy, the world is steadily growing better.

The Kingdom is Steadily Coming

If justice, peace, and joy constitute the Kingdom of God, as Paul says, then history emphatically declares that the Kingdom of God has been steadily coming. And so, in spite of what people call "the arrest of the Christian Church," in spite of reactions and defeats, there is no need for us to groan and croak over the world's future. "Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day." The angels' song was no mockery. The Child born at the first Christmas has been surely and steadily coming into His Kingdom. Let the teachings of history dispel our depressions and despairs. The Lord Who has already accomplished so much will accomplish everything. "He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet." Poverty, vice, crime, drink, war, lust, greed—those giant evils that now vex our earth and defy our efforts and well-nigh break our hearts—shall all be clean abolished and swept away, and this world of ours shall become like the garden of the Lord. The world has been growing better; it will grow better still.

A Scent of Sweet Lavender

A Complete Story

By FLORENCE BONE

THE sunlight of a late September was filling the Langdale Valley with that soft, golden haze which is peculiar to itself. On every side rose the great fells, clothed as yet in a living purple that was soon to die into faded heather. High above, a trickle of silver water fell against the dark rocks, and tumbled among the heather in a musical fall.

A great silence seemed to fill all the valley and to creep up to the crags above, where there was no sound save the cropping of the little black-faced mountain sheep as they climbed from crag to crag. The summer was ended, the tourists had all gone, and the Westmorland dalesmen had their wonderful country to themselves again.

But under the spur of an overhanging rock there was one occupant of the fellside, who sat among the parsley ferns, making a desk of a flat rock by his side for a sheet of music paper on which he was dotting down hieroglyphics of his own. By his side, on the short turf, lay two solid, shabby-looking books, manuals of English law, in which he was supposed to be immersed, but his whole soul was given for the moment to the music that he was writing to a little song.

Dick Martindale was nobody in the village of Langdale but a lame lad who played the church organ, and who had lived with his aunt, Miss Janet Snow, in the white cottage under the fell, ever since one blustering winter night, when the carrier left him, a delicate baby of three, at her door. Miss Janet possessed all the reserve as well as the grit of the North Country, and she had confided to no longing neighbour either the story of a sister's broken heart, or her own intentions concerning the boy who did so brilliantly at the village school, and who, in spite of a slender purse and many head shakings, she had kept at the nearest grammar school until he was sixteen.

But now it was holiday time, and Dick was eking out slight resources by keeping sheep on the deserted fells, and training the village boys in the music that his whole

soul loved. It was only up here on the wild fells that he might indulge it to the full, and scribble down those little songs of which he was half ashamed. In spite of the slender grist that it brought to the mill, Miss Janet regarded it with suspicion.

The boy leaned back against the crag behind him, and passed his hand somewhat wearily across his brow. He looked down at the law books at his feet, and then away to the sheep, and the great, silent fells. He moved his lame foot impatiently. What a mighty distance lay between his ambitions and his actions! In the days to come would it be possible for his own, frail life to bridge that gulf? Or was Dick Martindale going to be a failure?

"Never!" he said aloud to himself, picking up one musty tome and viewing it with distaste, and at that moment up the fellside came a sound—a wonderful, vibrating, lingering sound of haunting tenderness, that came straight out of one heart to touch all those that heard it.

Dick drew a long breath, and his thin face flushed under its tan as he leaned forward in the eagerness of his music lover's heart. Nearer and nearer thrilled the wonderful voice, letting out all its power across the empty hills, sobbing into a rare undertone of tremulous feeling, and dying away, as day dies, in a lovely and dearly loved place.

Then a slight figure came into view, silhouetted against the silvering sky, and a girl poised herself on an opposite crag and suddenly caught sight of Dick. Something leapt into Stella Greylings' eyes, but as quickly was extinguished. Did she know that she had been a lodestar to Dick ever since she wore pinny-forens? Perhaps she did, but there was a great gulf between her father's big and prosperous farm and Miss Janet Snow's cottage.

"Hulloa, Dick!" she called out, her mellow tones thrilling the lad again as she spoke. "What are you doing up there-star gazing?"

"Maybe," returned Dick briefly, looking straight into Stella's eyes.



"Oh, Stella! The world will be at your feet."

She flushed slightly, and took off her broad-brimmed hat; the last bars of sunset fell across her hair and turned it to living gold. Then, with shining eyes, she came lightly across the space between them, and sat down by Dick's side.

"I've got it," she said, a great triumph in her voice.

"Got what?"

"The scholarship. I'm going up to London next month, and, after that, I'm determined it shall be Germany."

"Oh, Stella! The world will be at your feet."

"I mean it to be—none of your little provincial successes for me."

"And when it is"—Dick's voice was low and halting, and husky with a great love that had grown with every fibre of his boyhood's growth—"when it is, Stella, will you remember that I have been there all the time?"

She knew what he meant, but she turned

away from him, lightly humming a little tune in her flexible, silver voice.

"You are a boy," she said, somewhat contemptuously. "It's hard work that lies before you," and she pointed to the discarded law books. "What have you been wasting your time with here?"

She picked up the sheet of music, and hummed the delicate air. Then, almost in spite of herself, she began to sing the little song:—

There's a scent of sweet lavender under the wall,
It grows in a bush by the way—
Soft is the sheen of its old-fashioned grace,
Its leaves are silver grey.
Still, it is fragrant, though dead are the days
When it grew there for you and for me—
And gone is the glamour my lavender wore
When its charm was a treasure to thee."

THE QUIVER

Stella laughed, with a sound in her mirth of that hard-hearted cynicism which comes sometimes to youthful success—and breaks only with a breaking heart.

"How desperately sentimental!" she said. "Do you call yourself a man, Dick?" and a mocking light danced in her eyes.

But there was an answering flash in Dick's. "I mean to, one day," was all he said, and his voice was cold with the chill that her light laughter had brought to his heart.

"Some day's another name for never," said Stella contemptuously, and she ran her eyes carelessly over the second verse of the song. Almost unconsciously she sang it, for the dainty music in the haunting refrain went straight to the music-loving heart that might keep other things at bay, but could not resist that.

"When dusk falleth gold in the gate of the west,
I gather my lavender rare,
Out of my heart, where its old, faded flowers
Linger with memory there;
And sometimes I dream in the shadow to-day—
Lavender's message to me—
That in days when the distance dies out of our lives,
'Twill again be a treasure to thee."

Unconsciously Stella's voice took on a tone of sympathy, and rose and fell across the hillside in delicious rippling tones that gathered force into passion and dream as the last four lines trembled into a haunting cadence. Dick clasped his fingers together, and his whole nature was stirred. He did not realise it was his music that she sang. He only knew that while life should last there would never be to him any voice but Stella's, any face but hers, or any other heart to desire.

"Oh, Stella!" was all he said, when at last the music died into a sobbing breath across the fells.

"Oh, Dick!" she answered mockingly, but her eyes did not meet his. She had heard the call of the world beyond the hills, and she did not want to listen to her heart.

"Are you sixteen, or sixty?" she asked him mischievously.

"I—I didn't write the words," muttered Dick. "I found them."

Stella's laugh thrilled through the gathering dusk. She waved her hand. "This is good-bye," she said. "I am going on a round of visits to-morrow before I begin my work. It will be a long time before the valley sees me again."

Dick started to his feet, but the space between them was strewn with boulders. She stepped from one to another with an agile grace that is only born of the hillsides. What chance had he, a lame lad, to reach her side? He was handicapped, body as well as spirit, in the race with Stella.

"Then when shall I see you again?" he called through the dim gloaming.

"Some day—some day," came back the ringing voice from below. The slender figure in its pink cotton gown grew fainter in the distance. Stella had passed out of sight, and out of Dick's life. In the years of grim, hard work before him he was often to live over again this September evening on the fells, but always with the vision of the girl he loved passing slowly out of sight, and the knowledge that some day might mean never.

He gathered up his books, with firmly set lips; already something of his boyhood had left him. Then he looked among the boulders for the sheet of music, but it was nowhere to be found.

Either Stella had crumpled it into a ball and thrown it across the fellside, or she had carried it away with her into the life where Dick could not follow.

He could scarcely hope that after her mocking laughter, for he had not learnt to read a woman's nature when she is afraid of her own heart, so he shrugged his shoulders and went away down the hillside after fastening up the sickly sheep for the night.

The lamp was lighted in Miss Janet Snow's cottage. Its cheery glow streamed out through the open window, and a cosy little fire blazed in the old-fashioned grate. The supper table was laid for two with the simple dainties of the North Country, and Miss Janet herself sat in the arm-chair reading a weekly paper.

She was a tall, spare woman, in a plain, trim gown, and with bands of grey hair parted above a broad brow that spoke of intellectual strength and a nature wide in its sympathies. Her lips were sad and firmly closed, as though to hide much history and more than one sorrow that had left a mark. There was that in her face which betokened the strength of her own northern crags, but her eyes were lit still by a woman's ambition and a woman's heart.

She laid down her paper. It was not the

A SCENT OF SWEET LAVENDER

gossipy news of a local district, but a literary weekly full of the events of men's minds and the changing thought of the day. It was a long time now since this strong and simple country woman had begun to get her boy ready for his future by getting ready for it herself.

She went to the window, and looked out to the darkening fells, beyond which her heart never went for herself.

"The lad is late," she said aloud. "I doubt me he has met Stella on the fellside, for I saw her go up yon way. Eh, laddie, laddie, 'Ye ha' many a thing to learn.'" A shadow crossed her face, but there was no irritation in her voice. It was on large lines that Miss Janet was built.

She saw him then, limping through the dusk, wearily, as though his very youth were a burden to him. He stopped a moment beside the lavender bush at the gate, and gathered a spike of the fading flowers. Then her eagerness overflowed, and she almost ran to fling the door open.

"Come in, come in, laddie," she called. "It's grand news I have for ye—I canna keep it another hour."

Dick's eyes lightened, and he dragged his lagging feet up the flagged path. In all the boyhood that he had spent under the fells that cheery voice had never failed to give him a welcome.

The tea was made from the copper kettle on the hob, the hot cakes brought from the old-fashioned kitchen, and the firm white cheese cut with a generous hand. Then, with the old pewter teapot poised above the blue and white cups, Miss Janet looked at Dick with the light of great things to come in her eyes.

"Dick!" she said. "Dick Martindale! Your fortune's made if you've a mind to work, and you are no son of Westmorland if ye havena. I've been to Lancaster this day, and my savings 'll do it, lad. Before ye're three months older ye'll be an articled pupil to a Liverpool lawyer. I shall live to see ye Lord Chancellor, my bairn—eh, God grant my old bones may last me a bit longer yet."

Dick got up from his seat and kissed her weather-worn face. A zest for the work before him, a sudden impatience even with himself of that very afternoon, sprang up in his heart.

"May you never be disappointed in me, Aunt Janet," he said.

"Disappointed! The Lord and your own will forbid," cried the woman, who had worked all her life for this moment. "Eh, laddie, yon's a great city; ye'll tak' heed to your ways that your footsteps slip not?"

"Aye! You may trust me." He squared his shoulders.

"Ye'll put away foolin' wi' music, and ye'll remember—twill be a gey long time before ye can have aught—to do wi' a maid."

Dick sat in the shadow, and he was silent for a moment. When he spoke there was a bitterness in his tone that went straight to Miss Janet's heart and told her a tale.

"What would a maid want wi' a lame fellow?" he asked in a low tone.

"A good deal—some day," said Miss Janet, with some asperity. Then she leaned forward and laid her firm hand on Dick's.

"The lassie is good and true enow," she said, "but over full of herself. She thinks to sing to other women's hearts. Eh, but her own must greet before she can reach their sorrow. Life must open her eyes before she can make other people see it."

Dick said nothing, and Miss Janet rocked herself to and fro for a moment in the old rocking-chair. "She'll be a winsome woman—when she's made," she said, "like Wordsworth's Lucy. But she has only grown in the sun yet: she hasna stepped into the shadow. She hasna leaned her ear into that secret place whose beauty must needs pass into her whole spirit as well as her bonnie face."

Miss Janet had sunk into a reverie, and Dick went out silently into the starlit September night.

The mighty fells were hidden now; he could only see the white flowers whose scent rose up into the dark, and hear the silver trickle of the stream. He leaned over the little gate, and the spikes of the dying lavender touched his cheek. All his boyhood, all his future, seemed to be woven together into one great resolve—to be worthy of the trust of one good woman, and never to carry a "sickly soul" though he bore a sickly body. No beautiful maiden had tied her scarf about his sleeve, but he went out into the world for all that with the bands of a woman's great love about his heart.

Footsteps came along the valley, and voices reached Dick as he stood at the gate.

THE QUIVER

Then a light laugh thrilled him, and a man's voice, older, more cultured than his own, answered in tones of gay and flattering banter. Already Stella Greyling was at home in a world in which he had no place. But it lay with himself, and the future, to make one.

II

THE fog of a dark December day was creeping slowly up the Strand, and filling London with a mystery, even a romance, that lurks there in the winter dusk. The clang and clamour of modern life was throbbing in every square yard. The hoot of the motor, the hurry of the taxi-cab, were drowning the trot of horses on the wooden pavement, so long a London echo. But in the old by-ways about the quiet Temple, and behind the Law Courts, an atmosphere of other times still lingered. Where a great red sun died into mist, above the dome, black and aloof, of St. Paul's, there was a hint of poetry brooding over the prose and business of the London streets.

The Law Courts had been sitting all day, and had just risen after the *dénouement* of a long and sensational trial which had puzzled statesmen and legal lights, and in which the English press had revelled for a month. But on this dark December day there had been a stir in the dingy atmosphere of crime and accusation. The long hours had been entirely occupied by the cross-examination of a witness in the hands of a junior counsel, recently called to the Bar. His masterly questions, his *savoir-faire*, his address to the jury, had put an entirely different face upon the case, and had been heard with spell-bound attention. Society ladies had leaned forward to ask eagerly who he was, experienced dignitaries had listened to him with respect, and the case for which he stood had been brought to an unexpected and successful termination. When Richard Martindale came out into the mist and murk of the December day he knew that he had conquered his fate, and that a great future lay before him.

He had toiled for it with all the grit and capacity for work that belonged to his northern nature. His skill in the music that he still passionately loved was an almost forgotten pastime. But two beacon lights rose before him still—the rugged face and

indomitable hopes of Miss Janet Snow, whose faith had never failed him—and the memory of Stella's beautiful voice, that lured him still, while his dream of her made a shrine in his inmost heart.

Other women had begun to smile on him of late, but in the ceaseless study to which he had given himself their influence had been crowded out, and he unconsciously measured each one beside his memory, to their disparagement.

During these years of preparation he had heard very little of Stella. She had never come back to the farmstead on the hill. At first the glamour of her new life had held her, and new friends had claimed her time. Then misfortune stalked across the fells, and in the middle of the girl's expensive training her father lost his all, and then his life. Since that day, left to her own resources, Stella seemed to have disappeared from the horizon of Dick's life. He had heard of her in Dresden, and once a rumour reached him that she was living in Vienna. But from the quiet ways, and the fellsides of the Langdale Valley, Stella had wholly gone.

Dick walked on down the Strand in a tumult of varied feelings. The driver of a hansom hailed him, but he preferred to walk and try to realise his newly won fame. To-morrow every newspaper in the kingdom would blazon his name, and a grey-haired woman, far away in Westmorland, would polish her spectacles, and read, and read again, until the tears blurred her vision. Dick was the man of the week—even in the murky dusk of crowded London people were pointing him out to one another and whispering of his great speech.

He felt like a schoolboy let out for a holiday, for Christmas would come and go before he saw the Law Courts again. Surgical skill had reduced his lameness to a slight limp, and he turned towards Regent Street with a glad heart. Such a Christmas-box must reach Miss Janet from the gay and festive shops as she had never possessed before.

Dick paused before a jeweller's window, but turned away. There was nothing there that would appeal to Miss Janet Snow. In this hour of his triumph where was that young, beloved personality who had gone away out of his life to live her own?

He strolled along idly, and suddenly his

A SCENT OF SWEET LAVENDER

eyes fell on the letters that stared back at him from a huge hoarding. It was the announcement of a great concert in the Albert Hall that same evening, at which a new star who loomed large on the musical horizon was to sing. A sudden impulse drew Dick strongly towards the Albert Hall. If Stella were by any chance in London, such a concert would be a magnet to her, too. To-morrow Dick was going down into West-morland. To-night he would revel in such music as his soul loved.

The great hall was packed to overflowing, and a tense expectancy held the vast concourse that had come to hear the woman sing who had already thrilled Paris and Vienna. Rumour said she was beautiful, and report whispered that she was English, in spite of her name. This night was to determine whether she could reach and hold English hearts.

With a shimmer of white satin, and a gleam of pearls, the great singer passed to the room behind the platform. She was indeed

a beautiful woman, and her deep blue eyes, her shining hair, were the blue and gold of England, and of the North. But, as she handed her cloak to her maid, the singer's eyes were sad. She had known struggle, and hardship, and poverty; she had battled

with difficulties, and had won her way at last to splendid laurels. They were worn to-night, not as a light-hearted girl would have worn them, but as a responsibility laid upon a thinking and a feeling woman. Yet in this great hour the singer's heart was sad, because there was none of her own about her. The magnificent roses that awaited her bore a stranger's card. The sheaf of admiring letters, the flattering requests, came to her from those whom she had never

seen. Men had offered her high positions, great names, and gold, in exchange for her face and her voice; but not one had come to her with a great love in his eyes, and to-night she was alone in the world.

The mellow music of a famous violinist floated in from the hall. The singer gathered



"Behind the shimmer, and the pearls, and the roses, Stella had stepped back within his horizon"—p. 166.

THE QUIVER

up her music and turned to her maid for the splendid roses.

"Mademoiselle will need many encores to-night," said the Frenchwoman admiringly.

The singer smiled, and shook her head. Laying down the music of an Italian masterpiece, she sought among her songs for one written in pencil upon a sheet of music paper. Then, in answer to a furious burst of applause, she went away into the hall.

Dick had chosen an insignificant seat at some distance from the platform, and had spent the earlier portion of the concert in scanning the audience. Then came a pause, a hush, a great furore of clapping. The wonderful new singer was coming.

She walked on to the platform, with her shimmering gown floating behind her, and her eyes shining like mysterious stars between the halo of her hair and the roses in her hands. The grace of her movements, the sweetness of her smile, touched the heart of the vast audience, and they rose and cheered until the great building echoed and re-echoed, and the first, wonderful notes of her song were hardly heard.

But Dick sat still, and looked, and looked, and looked again. Behind the shimmer, and the pearls, and the roses, *Stella* had stepped back within his horizon again.

The lark-like notes, now clear as a flute, now wild as an autumn wind in the pines, or mellow as a summer zephyr, swept about the great building, carrying more than Dick's heart with them, and when the Italian masterpiece was ended Stella had conquered London.

A mad enthusiasm possessed the people as they recalled her again and again. At last she came back, without her music, without her roses, but with her slender hands clasped behind her.

A few bars on the grand piano. They seemed familiar to Dick, and he leaned forward and propped his head on his hands. Then in the magnificent voice, trained, and wonderful with sympathy and experience, came the little song, whose music he had written on the far-away fellside seven years ago.

Stella had sung it then with a half-contemptuous admiration and a reluctant sympathy. She sang it now from a heart that had felt and known.

"When dusk falleth gold in the gate of the west,
I gather my lavender rare,
Out of my heart, where its old, faded flowers
Linger with memory there;
And sometimes I dream in the shadow to-day—
Lavender's message to me—
That in days when the distance dies out of our lives,
'Twill again be a treasure to thee."

There was no applause for a full minute, as the song died away, save a sob that sounded here and there, and a faint sigh from many a fashionable breast.

But to Dick, the Albert Hall, the many coloured throng, even the stately singer, had disappeared. He was out again on the fells above the Langdale Valley, with a mocking girl in a pink cotton gown, whose eyes looked away to the world. And now Stella knew that world, and, if the little song were the message he felt it to be, it had sent her back to him.

In the tumult that followed the silence Dick left his seat, and walked up and down in the dark without, in a bewilderment of emotion. He forgot his own success and to-morrow's papers. He only knew that he had found Stella, and that he yearned for her as he would yearn for nothing else his whole life through.

He could hardly wait for the last song and the brief bars of the National Anthem, and then he was round at the performers' door, waiting impatiently among a jostling crowd.

"She is coming," the whisper ran from one to another, and with a silken rustle, a scent of flowers, the slender white figure appeared. Her foot was on the carriage step, she was gathering up her wonderful gown, when suddenly a big hand was laid on hers. She turned, and her eyes met Dick's.

"Stella!"

"Dick!"

For a moment they forgot the crowd and the fact that they were both notable figures whose doings were chronicled. Then Dick opened the door wider, and, helping her in, followed, and slammed it after him. Alone in the half-lights of the London streets, he held her hands; he bent over her, so near, so dear, but he knew not what to say.

"Oh, Stella, Stella, Stella!" he murmured. "I've found you—you must never go again."

She laughed, in a low and happy voice, that held no mocking breath.

A SCENT OF SWEET LAVENDER

"Was it the little song?" she asked.

"What made you sing it?"

"I was so lonely."

Stella's voice broke. "It is good to hear the North Country tones again, Dick."

Dick raised her slender hands, and crushed them against his lips. He would have spoken, but the carriage stopped.

"I go down to the Langdale Valley to-morrow," said Stella. "I have no home there now, or anywhere, but I have taken rooms. I long to see it all again."

"And I—go too, for the Christmas recess, to see Aunt Janet," replied Dick. "May we go together?"

It was a wonderful journey, out of the murk of London, into the clear wintry light of the everlasting fells. Each mile that the express traversed seemed to bring them nearer together, and half-way through that wonderful day Stella discovered, as she turned the morning paper idly, that the man at her side was the hero of the hour. The day of her triumph had been the day of his—but that day's glory to both of them was the fact that they had found each other.

The year had reached its last day when the crown of that glory came. They had scrambled up the mountain side, and were sitting in a cleft of the great bare bosom of the fell. Everywhere the last light of another year was dying. The heather had gone, and the bracken had faded to a russet brown; only the crags of the everlasting fells were unchangeable.

There was no breath of wind, no dash of rain, to mar the wonderful peace of the valley



"Her foot was on the carriage step, when suddenly a big hand was laid on hers. She turned, and her eyes met Dick's."

and the silence and aloofness all around. Even the silver trickle of water was held fast bound by the frost.

Stella had taken off her hat, and her shining hair was like an aureole. Dick looked down at her, and without a word each knew that the moment had come when they had done with loneliness and separation for ever.

He put his arms round her, and the shining head lay still and content against his breast, while he kissed her brow and her parted lips as he had so long and so passionately hungered to do.

"My darling," he whispered, "you want me at last."

"Oh, Dick!" she breathed. "I think I wanted you all the time. That was why—I kept the song."



"THE THOUGHTS OF YOUTH."

(Photo: Rita Martin)

In Childland

By HERBERT D. WILLIAMS

HE and She entered Childland with H trembling feet, and with the suspicion that they were venturing on unexplored parts. True, some time ago—a very long time ago—they had faint recollections of having been inhabitants of the land themselves, but it was more a tradition than a recollection.

He thought he remembered crying one day when his nurse would not let him hug the carving-knife ; She had a dim idea of toddling along home after the first day at school ; but these legendary glimpses did not entitle them to Citizen's Papers in the Kingdom of Childhood any more than the general inference that as we have all been children we are all domiciles of that country. Truth to tell, they were utter strangers in Childland, and entered with the tremulation felt by tourists landing in a foreign port for the first time, and without a knowledge of the language.

Now, He and She represent just two ordinary unsophisticated mortals who assume the rôle of parenthood, and knock at the gate of the Child's World ; He and She, in fact, might well represent all of us who are human enough, and humble enough, to sit at the feet of the child and learn of the mysteries and charms of his existence.

We are, nowadays, hearing more and more of the child—and rightly so. But with all our study we must confess to the widest measure of ignorance. We acknowledge the fact that we were all once children, but who can, with any degree of

certainty, put himself back into those early days, and give us even a tolerable idea of "the lay of the land" ? How many of us remember that triumph of physical nature—our first walk ? Yet it was a perfectly unique experience at the time, and might

well be regarded as an epoch-making event. Or who remembers that first great triumph of the intellect—the memorising of the alphabet ? Yet this was essentially the greatest achievement of the mind in its particular day, as important to us at that time as Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation to the world in general ; it was a stretching out to the great unknown, and when we first achieved it there must have been all the glamour and romance of pioneering about the performance. Alas, we do not remember it !

So He and She in every generation enter the Kingdom of Childland, and amuse their friends with the marvellous discoveries they make, from the first smile—into which fond parents read all sorts of possible and impossible meanings and portents—up to the conquest of the world by the

aspiring youth, and the tender confidences of gentle maidenhood. These things go on from generation to generation, but they are always new to those with eyes to see them, and we are always about as ignorant on the subject. The mere male mind can never really learn the geography of Childland, whilst some few mothers, from long and varied experience, know enough to wish for the opportunity to know a little more.



(Photo : Whitlock and Son, Ltd.)

WISTFUL

THE QUIVER



BEDTIME.

and tug one another about ; watch the little ones in the drawing-room fling the best cushions on to the floor, replace them and repeat the operation ; observe how they never seem to walk when they can run. Youth is always lavish ; it is only age that has learned to dole out carefully and sparingly.

This is perhaps the first impression. We soon become conscious, in the next place, of the spirit of romance that enshrouds the child. The world is gold and red to the child-eyes. Black sometimes enters into his little vision, but never grey. The spirit of wonder encircles everything. That deep shadow cast by the lamplight is a gnome ; the clouds, white and fleecy, are the mountains of another world ; he sees fairies hiding behind the buttercups, and princesses in old wooden dolls : all is romance to the child, for he has not learnt that " there is nothing new under

Energy and Romance

What are your first impressions of Childland ? I think we must be struck first of all with the vivacity, the endless energy of the little ones. See what immense labour they put into their play ; see how they hug

the sun." The world is full of surprises, full of wonder.

Imitation

We cannot help noticing, however superficial our study, what a great part imitation plays in Childland. See the little fellow watching, watching, with his great eyes following every movement of his mother, and his hands unconsciously carrying out her motions. Take him for a train journey and next day you will find him running up and down the stairs, slamming the doors, and whistling to an imaginary driver. Come across him unawares, and he will be giving a lecture to his playthings, in the drollest baby-imitation of adult fashion, founded on mother's talk to the butcher, or father's reproof to himself. So he sees, imitates, and learns.

Imitation is one of the most valuable assets the child possesses, and he uses it unsparingly wherever he goes : so be careful of the example you hold up before him !

If imitation is his first weapon of offence, curiosity makes a very good second. He



(Photo : Hazell, Cradon.)

"SECRETS."



By permission of Messrs. Louis Wolf and Co., Ltd., London.

THE HOME TEAM.
(From the Painting by Arthur J. Elsley.)

THE QUIVER

wants to know the why and the wherefore of everything ; and many a fond mother has been driven nearly to distraction with his oft-repeated " But why ? " He will take the clock to pieces to see what makes the time, and perform an operation on his sister's doll to discover how it says, " Mamma ! mamma ! " Still, in spite of occasional misdirected energy, imitation is his right hand and curiosity his left, in climbing the tree of knowledge.

But it is not these things that make He

life itself, by his very weakness he becomes stronger than the strongest. How often has the little unconscious infant, with his cry of helplessness, called into being new qualities of tenderness, chivalry and love—qualities that before had not been suspected.

The weak appealing child has turned the coward into a hero, has made the drunkard sober, the miser generous, the sinner a saint. No wonder that He and She worship him.

Then there is his trustfulness. The child,



"WHEN THE HEART IS YOUNG."

(By Ernest W. Philpott.)

and She the abject slaves of the child. What is it that makes us all worship at the shrine of the little babe, that makes him the ruler of the home ? Perhaps I might name some of the things that constitute his charm—his helplessness, his trustfulness, his humility, his readiness to forgive, and his faith.

Helplessness and Trustfulness

His helplessness. That was what touched the mother and father hearts of He and She when first they bent over the little one. Entirely dependent upon them, even for

until he is taught suspicion and caution by his elders, will " trust and not be afraid." Naturally timid and fearful, yet he will go to sleep on the edge of a precipice if father is there to hold his hand. He will put his life into your keeping without the shadow of a doubt. He places implicit reliance upon your word. The fact that " father said so," " mother promised," is as good as a draft on the Bank of England. He will believe the most ridiculous story, and it is one of his most painful discoveries that people can deliberately depart from the truth.

IN CHILDLAND

We said, at the outset, that none of us know much about Childland. How many of us know anything about the religion of the child? We are told in the Old Book of the time when our first parents walked and talked with God in the cool of the evening. Who knows but what the child, fresh from heaven, does not keep up that sweet intercourse until, with advancing years, he loses the vision of the morn?

Of course, this is one side of the picture. He and She soon learn that baby has a temper of his own, a will that tends to wrong, a perversity that has to be corrected. He loves the sweet and detests the bitter—like children of an older growth! Yet He and She—and all of us—learn more than we teach the child. We give him life, but he gives us love, and he enriches us just by what he draws out of us.

In olden days the child was despised, neglected and wronged. But there came One Who taught us that the child is to be our model—an unconscious model it is true—for he who would enter the Kingdom of Heaven must first become as a little child.



"FLOWERS FOR MOTHER."

The humility of the child does not need much insisting upon. The Hon. Mrs. Smith-Jones will not deign to nod to Mrs. Tomkins, but young Master Smith-Jones will play with the butcher's boy with as much gusto as with a duke's son. There are no social distinctions with the child: he is the only true democrat.

There is another feature which distinguishes the ordinary child—his readiness to forgive. The true child is never vindictive or revengeful; he will get into a temper, slap his mother and kick the nurse, but half an hour after he is punished he will be caressing the hand that smote him.

Last of all, the faith of the child is surely the most beautiful thing in the world. His mind has not become used to proving all things—and doubting most. A child is naturally religious, and turns to God just as readily as the flowers to the sunshine. He prays with the sweet freedom of youth—prayers which sometimes sound irreverent to our convention-stilted ears, but which are really models of simplicity and faith.



"PITY MY SIMPLICITY."



"WHICH WILL YOU HAVE?"
(Photo: H. & H. Clevedon.)

“Forgive us our Trespasses”

The Story of a Christmas Reconciliation

By MONTAGUE HERBERT

I

THE Rev. Arthur Hemridge, Vicar of Sendfell, sat in his study, struggling with his sermon for the coming Christmas morning.

“On earth peace”; “Think not that I am come to send peace . . . but a sword.” The two texts had struck him some time ago, and he had noted them down as a suggestion for a Christmas sermon: the strange paradox of Christianity—its message of peace; but peace through strife, the peace of the conquest of right. The theme suggested a powerful discourse, and he started to develop the first point.

How silent the house was! He had always insisted on the necessity of quiet when preparation time came. Now he almost longed for the banging of a door, or the merry snatch of song that betokened his wife's presence.

She had been away exactly three weeks that day. The first fortnight had been an infinite relief to him; he had gone about his work with the air of a man from whom a heavy burden had been lifted. But somehow, in spite of the quiet, he had missed her presence this week.

“INTRODUCTION.—*The Gospel Paradox. Peace, a sword. Love to man, punishment of sin.*”

The vicar wrote the words at the top of the paper, then laid his pen down. It was inevitable that he should send his wife away; he had given her chance after chance, and at the last chance she had failed. He, with his preaching gifts and his devotion, would not have been still at the little fishing village of Sendfell if his wife had not grievously offended the Bishop—grossly insulted him in his own house. She had alienated the parishioners at his city charge, and even here she had quarrelled with Mrs. Jones, who took the Mothers' Meeting. That had been the last offence—the straw which broke the camel's back.

When he spoke to her on the subject she replied in icy tones. She did not even trouble to quarrel with him, but readily agreed to his suggestion that she

should accept her mother's invitation to go home “for a time”—for good, was the unspoken understanding.

“FIRST POINT.—*Righteousness before peace. An ignoble acceptance of wrong is not peace, but sloth. God demands rightness of heart before peace can reign.*”

The sermon was making slow progress. He remembered Margaret as he had seen her for the first time. He recalled with a sad, grim smile her eagerness to hear him, her delight in his explanations of science and theology; he thought of the strange glamour she had cast over him. Under her influence he had preached twice as effectively; the love that entered his life through her eyes made the world a new creation to him. But she was a headstrong and wayward girl—one moment docile and humble, the next insisting on her own way at all costs. At one time she would absorb his sermons and enter into his parish work with zest; the next week she would throw it all up and insist on a round of pleasure and gaiety, so disturbing to the Vicarage, and such a scandal to the parish. And then she would be penitent and promise amends. So penitent—but so uncertain! He had endured it all patiently, hopefully. He had pleaded with her, reasoned with her, prayed for her, agonised over her, but all to none effect. So he had agreed that they should separate. She should go her way, he his. There would be no scandal. Her mother's prolonged indisposition offered the necessary excuse. She would stay at her mother's home—indefinitely. His marriage had been a mistake. He was a man of quiet life, intent on filling the office that had been appointed him, beloved of his people and anxious to do good; she was ambitious, with an incessant craving for excitement, a veritable untamed child of nature. But now it was all over, and only work remained.

Hemridge turned wearily to his manuscript; but this time an outward interruption stopped the writing. The door opened noisily, and little Mark, his only son, burst in. He was on his way to bed, and had come to say good-night. Flaxen-haired, round

"FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES"

of face, he had his father's brow, but his mother's sparkling, restless eyes. Awed, as always, by the quiet and grim study, and his father, he knelt on the vicar's lap and said his prayers.

"Bless mummy ; bring her back soon, 'cos I wants her. No, no ! Me *won't* bless Nan, 'cos she's a wicked, spiteful fang, and me *hates* her ! " This with all the vehemence of his youthful spirits. He had inherited his mother's temper, and Nan, his nurse, had offended him. "She's a spiteful fang, and she pinched me, and I hate her ! "

"What was I teaching you, sonny ? " said Hemridge gravely. "Forgive us—as we forgive."

But soon, with a little coaxing, the bad temper was gone, Nan was forgiven, the prayers were said, and the little boy marched off to bed.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." A momentary wave of bitterness swept over the vicar. Could he forgive her ? She who had spoilt his life and wrecked his happiness ? He turned once more to his task, as the time was flying.

II

"MY DEAR HUSBAND—"

He had opened the letter somewhat impatiently. It was the first note she had sent him since she had gone away, except for a brief line telling of her safe arrival.

"MY DEAR HUSBAND,

"I cannot stay here any longer without you. It has all been my fault, and I most sincerely apologise for my shocking behaviour. Can you forgive me once more ? I know I do not deserve it ; but, believe me, I really did not mean to offend you. I have been blaming myself most bitterly the last few weeks, and calling myself all the hard names I could think of. Can you trust me once more ? I will try so hard to be good. Please, *please*, write and say I may come back.—Your loving wife,

"MARGARET."

"My shocking behaviour." She writes like a schoolgirl," commented Hemridge bitterly. His usual good temper had deserted him this morning. The breakfast had been

spoilt in the cooking. Whatever his wife's weak points, she had always insisted on the orderliness of the meals. Then, too, he had been unable to finish his sermon the previous night ; inspiration seemed to have left him, and he had had to creep to bed after an hour's fruitless labour.

Study seemed out of the question this morning, so he put on his heavy boots, and tramped across the fields to make a few calls, his wife's letter in his pocket.

"Can you forgive me once more ? " Could he forgive her ? What hopes and visions he had had when he married her ! He judged himself the happiest man in the kingdom when he took her to be his own. Life was before them, and what great things they might have made of it ! If only she had been less unreasonable, if only she had entered into the spirit of his work, put away her ambitions of social distinction, and been content to help him ! What good they might have done ! And now she asked him to forgive her—once more. Had he not given her "one more chance" ? Had he not "wiped the slate" again and again ? Treated bygones as bygones, and all to the same end ? He loved her still—with less of the passion of youth, but with a more unselfish, a more yearning love. But he had ceased to believe in her. Cynicism had taken the place of hope. He wished he could feel angry, but he only felt bitter. He remembered her pitiful face when she had asked to be forgiven, after the scene when she had petulantly thrown down his books at his feet in front of his workers' committee. She had been scornful then, but so humble next day. He could not resist her pleading face, and had forgiven her. But now he could only smile grimly at her pleas for forgiveness. They were real and sensational—but too often repeated.

Even now he would like to take her back. His heart cried out for her, but his judgment forbade. It was for their own good that they should remain apart. It was for the good of the parish, for the good of the work to which he had been called, that she should leave him. She was the victim of temperamental weakness. He supposed that was the most charitable judgment he could pass. But oh ! if she could only have conquered her moods and tried to be his help-meet.

And so through the day ; and at even-song his voice quivered as he led the little

THE QUIVER

congregation in the prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

"I will write her in the morning—and forgive her," he muttered as he went to bed. "But I will tell her not to come back."

III

ON Sunday morning a terrific storm broke over the little fishing village of Sendfell. After a night of fitful and ominous calm, early dawn had brought black banks of clouds from the north-east. The wind blew in great gusts that tore down trees and shattered frail windows; on the front the sea wrought havoc amongst the fishermen's boats, and rendered locomotion of any sort well nigh impossible. The vicar, after struggling to church, found the door banged in his face by the violence of the elements, and with difficulty forced his way in. The congregation was gathering, but only a handful of the more hardy had ventured out.

In due time and order the choir—or the nucleus of it—filed in, and the service commenced.

The opening sentences and prayers were gone through, and not till the psalm was being sung did the vicar pass his eyes over the scattered congregation. There stood Sam Jones, who had the form of a giant and the tenderness of a mother. He looked every inch a leader of men, as fearless as the very storm that swept round the building. Three seats away was old Hezekiah Short, the schoolmaster, faithful to his church, though he would never see sixty again. Round to the right, by the pillar, was the Vicarage pew, where the vicar's wife should have been. He glanced over there. Good heavens! Could he trust his eyes? *His wife was there!* He looked again, lest his imagination should have deceived him. It was quite true. Pale as death, with quivering lips, she turned eyes full of pleading to him as their glances met. The vicar frowned and went on with the service. The next moment a gust of wind of more than usual violence shook the church from door to steeple. Then a dull boom, boom, was heard, followed by the noise as of a rocket being discharged. A ship had run aground.

Sam Jones, after a moment of hesitation, and a glance at the vicar, slipped from his

place and hurried out. He was captain of the lifeboat. Other members of the crew who were present followed.

During the next few prayers more booms fell on the ears of the worshippers. More of the congregation slipped out, first the men and then the women. Hemmidge debated whether to abandon the service, but as a handful still remained he decided to continue.

The half-dozen worshippers paid little attention to the readings and the prayers—except one pale figure whose eyes seemed not to wander from the vicar the whole time. Evidently, from the sounds outside the church, the lifeboat had been launched, and by the time the sermon began the commotion outside had abated. Hemmidge abridged his sermon to the utmost, but it seemed the longest he had ever preached—both to himself and to the little company listening for what was happening outside. From time to time voices could be heard: then silence. How was the lifeboat faring?

The sermon had nearly ended when a tremendous shout rang out outside. Something had happened! The few remaining worshippers could stand it no longer. With apologetic looks they crept out, leaving the vicar alone with his wife!

What happened after that Hemmidge could never quite understand. He supposed that somehow he finished his sermon and said the closing prayer. Most likely it was the work of a moment or two: it seemed hours. The service had ended. He hesitated. Should he go forward and speak to his wife, and ask why she had returned, or—as in the usual course—proceed straight to the vestry? He came down the pulpit steps for one moment undecided. Then resolutely he turned to the vestry.

All this time Margaret had stood as if rooted to the spot. He caught sight of her face as he turned, and its pathetic disappointment touched him to the heart. He half moved round, again undecided. At that moment the door flew open and a fisherman rushed in. "Please, sir, come at once. You're wanted!" Hemmidge and his wife hurried out of the church and on to the sea front.

"The lifeboat's been overturned, and they're bringing the bodies ashore!" explained the man who had called them.

The scene was one of indescribable



"The lifeboat's been overturned, and they're bringing the bodies ashore!"

confusion. Somehow—no one knew how—the lifeboat had been overturned. Most of the crew had managed to extricate themselves from the vessel and swim to land, but two or three—including the brave captain—were underneath when the boat was dragged ashore, and when their bodies were recovered they were apparently lifeless.

It was at this critical moment that everybody lost their heads. The captain of the lifeboat had been the leader of the men from time immemorial; it had always been his lot to give the orders, and without him there seemed to be no one to take command. The men who had swum ashore were hardly in a condition to render first aid, and the rest of the crowd was composed of women and a few old men who had been seeing the boat off.

Mrs. Jones added to the confusion by throwing herself hysterically on her husband's body. The little group of onlookers, as Hemridge approached them, turned in-

distinctively to the vicar for instructions. It was a moment when Hemridge ought to have risen supremely to the occasion—and it was the moment when he disastrously failed. He looked helplessly at the sea-soaked men and the grief-stricken women, knew that something was required of him, but could not make up his mind quite what to do.

Mrs. Jones sent up a frantic wail—"My husband! He's dead! he's dead!"

"Where shall we take the bodies, sir?" asked the fisherman who had called them from the church.

"My husband! You shan't take him! He's dead! he's dead!" screamed the poor woman.

Before the vicar had made up his mind what course of action to adopt, the leadership had fallen into other hands. Margaret had taken in the situation at a glance, and, with her woman's quick instinct, at once knew what was required.

Gently, but firmly, she drew aside the

THE QUIVER

weeping woman. "Your husband is not dead. Go at once and get a warm bed ready for him, and we'll bring him along!"

With short, sharp words of command she directed the fishermen how to proceed. The daughter of a doctor, she was familiar with first-aid work, and soon had all the men engaged in the work of resuscitating the captain and the other victims of the disaster.

Mrs. Jones was, by Margaret's orders, led away by one of the women; others went in search of blankets and hot drinks.

Half an hour went by. One of the men had recovered, and had been moved off to his home, but there was no sign of life in the captain.

The vicar, who at first had looked on with surprise and dismay, was now busily helping.

"I am afraid it is useless!" he said at last.

"Nonsense! Do not leave off for a minute!" replied Margaret.

Presently a faint touch of colour crept into the captain's cheeks; and he opened his eyes.

"Thank God!" murmured the vicar.

IV

ALL the men were saved, by the practical common-sense and timely aid of the vicar's wife. But Margaret herself, when all was finished, had had to be carried off to bed in a fainting condition.

It was Christmas Day. The storm had ceased long since, and through the bright crisp air the church bells would soon be ringing the glad tidings of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

The vicar, ready for morning service, came to spend the remaining hour with his wife before going to church. He dropped into a chair by the side of the bed and watched the pale, beautiful face and the closed eyes. He had spent hours thus watching, from the time that they carried Margaret into the little room. And they had been hours of deep thought and self-examination. At first he had bitterly reproached himself for failing at the time of need. Why had he not been able to act when the moment required? Why should a woman—his wife—have to take the initiative and assume the command? Soon his thoughts had taken another

direction. He reviewed once again his relations to Margaret. He thought of her waywardness, her many mistakes, her impulsiveness. Yet this habit of acting on the spur of the moment had saved the lives of those fishermen, and made her the hero of the village. Could it be that he had judged her too harshly, and not sufficiently understood her character? How his slow, deliberate judgment must have irritated her at times! How his cold, resistless logic must have been galling to this creature of impulse! He had not thought of that before; but perhaps, after all, he had been cold, hard, and unsympathetic. She was of another order to himself; no doubt he had done wrong in marrying a woman of such totally different temperament, but, having done so, was it not his duty to understand her, to sympathise with her, to help rather than condemn her? She had her faults, but so had he, and the faults of each were caused by their different natures. He had accused her of temperamental weakness; had he not his temperamental weakness, too?

And now, on that lovely Christmas morning, as he watched the pale face on the bed, a great wave of tenderness swept over him. This was the woman he had loved—the woman he loved still. He remembered once again their first meeting, the love-light in her eyes, her merry smile, her provoking waywardness—the waywardness that had made her all the more charming in those old days.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." He remembered the sentence he had tried to teach their little boy.

Giving way to a sudden impulse, Hemidge bent down and imprinted a light kiss on Margaret's cheek. She turned, then opened her eyes, and there was a faint smile on her face.

"Is that you, Arthur? I dreamt we were just married again."

"Aye, it shall be a new marriage and a new beginning. It's Christmas Day, dear." And he kissed her once again.

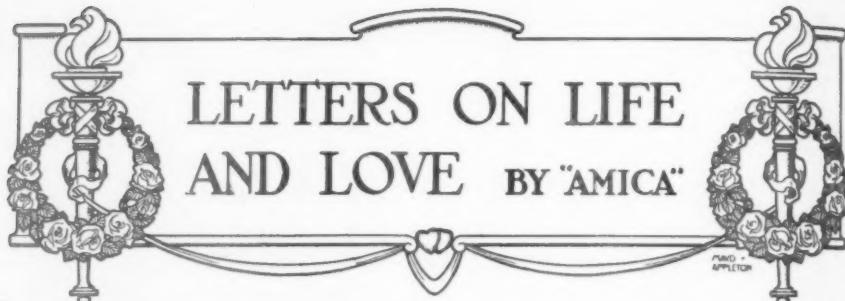
* * * * *

The vicar got through his Christmas sermon somehow. He touched very lightly on the first point, but his "final word" on "peace, forgiveness, a new beginning," was a very long one and given with great feeling.



THE GUIDE OF LIFE

(Drawn by Simon Harmon Vedder.)



LETTERS ON LIFE AND LOVE BY "AMICA"

No. 2.—To a Man who Regrets his Matrimonial Engagement

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND.—When I parted from you yesterday I told you I had still more to say on the subject we had discussed, and you smilingly urged me to write it, alleging that you would give every word of mine your attention. We had been talking of social dilemmas, and you said there were few to beat a binding promise that you would like to be free of. Something in your words moved the matter out of the impersonal region in which we had been wandering, and reminded me that I had heard of your contemplated marriage, and also that you had not invited my congratulations. I argued the case a little, to establish or allay my suspicion, and found a testiness in your tone and a flippancy in your remarks that seemed to justify my surmise. When you added, "A fellow has got to behave decently, no matter what he feels," I became convinced that the fellow in question was, at that moment, not far from my elbow.

By "decently," I think you mean in a way that one need never recall with humiliation, but it is possible to be humiliated unjustly, and to be put in the wrong by reason of false estimates. There is a good deal more in life than the courageous facing of difficulties: a man might deeply wrong himself when thinking to do his duty. I think women are often sacrificed matrimonially to family or social estimates, and men to the fetish of the word they have spoken, sometimes a very foolish and ill-considered word; in neither case do I consider the idol worthy of the offering.

I want to talk this thing over frankly. Seniority and intimacy give one privileges. I have known you since you wore blue ribbons on your baby shoulders, and toddled about supported by one of the fingers of the grown-ups, and I retain many a record of your schoolboy ^{days} written by your happy mother. For these reasons, and because the crisis in a life ought to interest all who are conscious of it, I will give you a woman's unprejudiced opinion. While it is admirable to set the highest standard for ourselves, it is helpful that a friend should sometimes remind us that each of us has rights as well as duties.

I do not know that this marriage business is ever conducted as wisely as it might be, and I am not sure that the Anglo-Saxon does not mismanage it to its top notch. If the State did the wooings, and undertook weddings, as was the case in the best days of Sparta, I believe the level of happiness and of national good sense would ascend. But the hands of the clock of time do not turn back, and the present habit is to muddle along.

I wonder why you thought you would like to spend the remainder of your life with Miss Blank! Was it because she danced very nicely the first time you saw her; or was it because she wore a becoming silver ribbon in her hair, and you thought she looked pretty; or was it because another girl was jealous of her, and you wanted to make her more jealous still? I have known marriages determined by each of these inadequate motives, an argument surely in favour of some kind of control.

LETTERS ON LIFE AND LOVE

If I were a man, I should not marry unless I felt life would be unendurable without a particular woman, while, with her, good or evil fortune would be merely circumstances in a well-ordered history. Without abiding, intelligent, mutual sympathy I should think it difficult for people to continue to interest each other. Of course, they can jog along—many people do—but the young are free to aim at more inspiring conditions. I wonder, did you believe you ardently loved this girl, till emotion stood aside, and reflection came; or did you drift into a declaration because she was near and you were idle; or, because another girl snubbed you, did you take this method of convincing her that you did not care? You are very young, and youth is like a weathercock and responds to many a light wind.

I know nothing of the lady, except what attaches to the fact that I have heard nothing against her; had she been a terrible outsider, someone would certainly have told me. Yet, being engaged to her, you speak of the married state as one might of travelling by rail, regarding it as a convenient, everyday necessity. That being so, you are not in love.

To my mind—and, remember, I make no profession of romance—marriage should result from a conviction on the part of two people that their union would enormously increase the happiness of both. Failing that condition on both sides, I feel sure the partnership agreement should not be signed. I have quite old-fashioned ideas about the dignity and indissolubility of the marriage tie, and about the futility of any attempt to reshuffle the cards once the whole hand has been played. For that reason I am disposed to be very cautious over the preliminaries to the game. If less formality attached to the prologue, if the getting engaged were paraded less than we parade it, little discomfort would attach to the recitation which is frequently necessary. Were I the arbiter of social usages, I should make it an evidence of bad manners to announce an engagement before a year's intimate intercourse had afforded the pair facilities of making adequate acquaintance with each other's tastes and inclinations, while age-long engagements should

be equally banned. I think public taste could be educated to regard a sudden engagement to marry as a piece of vulgarity as unbecoming as getting drunk at dinner. Both indicate deficient control: society should cold shoulder them equally.

The community loves a lover. Young Lochinvar, Jock o' Hazeldean, the Lord of Ulva's Isle, it was love rendered these dashing gentlemen immortal. Certainly none of them desired to run away from the lady—had he done so, that would have been quite another story.

Twice in my younger days have I been consulted by men of my own generation regarding an engagement they regretted. Each stated his case, simply wanting advice, and having no fear of a betrayal of confidence. In one case the engagement had been drifted into—the man was temporarily idle, and the girl was there; too late he discovered how little they had in common. In the other case constitutional, hereditary delicacy manifested itself after the engagement had been made public; it was not the position of nurse to a valetudinarian that the man had aspired to. Both men were disappointed, yet each wanted to do right. I was younger then than now; I fear I was more foolish: heroism seemed to me a definite and desirable condition. I advised both to abide by their word; I judged that the finer course, and spoke as I thought. They took my advice—to their sorrow. To-day I would be dictator to no one on a matter so momentous. Observe that I do not say to you, "Do that, or this," but merely indicate that to have spoken should not establish unalterable conditions when one realises that he spoke unwisely. I had false estimates once. I thought man was always the seeker, woman the sought. I no longer think so; and I believe we are of value to our kind in proportion as we impart to them the truths we know.

More than half the marriages that are effected are due to female initiative; that being so, it is dreadful that the man should suffer obloquy if he wishes to withdraw from the agreement while there is still time. No doubt there are cases where the breaking of an engagement is dastardly, but there are other cases where

THE QUIVER

it is a mere measure of self-protection. If the need for retraction never arose, all would be well, but better twenty broken engagements than one wretched home.

Commercially, it is a good thing to hold every bargain binding ; " His word is as good as his bond " is a sentence that quickens the pulse ; the best of all records awards a high place to him who, having sworn to his hurt, changes not. But in mental estimates feeling is everything, and if either party to a love bond no longer desires to be held by it the spirit of the promise is dead. Some might argue that this applies equally to marriage, but the engagement to marry is a mere attribute of Western civilisation—neither primitive man nor the Oriental has it among his usages—while marriage entails responsibilities the world over.

Getting out of an engagement is a painful business for a man, and rather than encounter its difficulties many just set their teeth and go on to the bitter end. Sometimes the result is better than could have been anticipated. Human nature is so adaptable that the race can accommodate itself to any conditions not quite unendurable. I feel sure any reasonable man would in time acquire a liking for a woman who was helpful and sensible and amiable. Unluckily there is no certainty the undesired bride will possess these attributes ; indeed, I could tell some quite interesting stories of how tyrannous an undesired wife may prove. Was not Mrs. Abraham Lincoln a case in point ? There is no secret about what has been set out so freely in " Some Famous Love Stories."

There is an easy way of getting out of a regretted engagement, provided the girl has dignity. Given some negligence on the part of the man, and she will take the initiative in renouncing the engagement. But all girls are not of this proud spirit.

Socrates had probably the case of the sensitive man held against his will in view when he said, " Whichever course you take, you will regret it." One wonders if he made some efforts to be free of Xantippe before he wedded her. I am disposed to think he did his best in that direction.

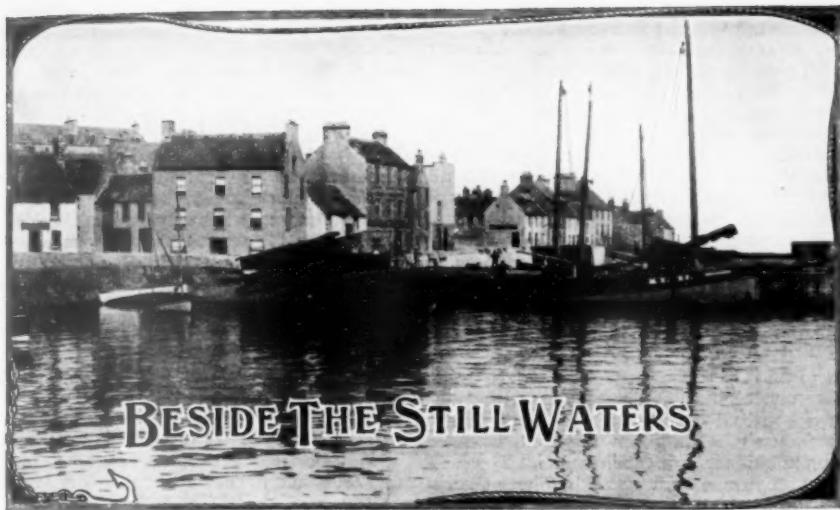
This battle is your own : no one can come to your rescue, you must fight it yourself ; but it may strengthen your hands to know that if you ask your freedom like a man no one whose opinion matters will think a whit the worse of you. The pain will be yours, and that no one can minimise ; but the shame ! my dear boy, it need never exist. To my mind, the individual should never be sacrificed to the individual ; it may be right to suffer for the state or the race or the community, but none should lay his neck under another's chariot wheels, or waste his happiness lest another should suffer the smart of hurt feelings. We are the natural guardians of our own happiness as much as of our honour or our life ; mistakes have to be atoned for as much as sins, but let us not exact of ourselves what another would not exact of us—a life-long penalty.

In case of a regretted engagement, I should deem it a reasonable and fair thing to go to one of the girl's male relatives and say, " We two have made a mistake which were better ended. Will you tell me what will pain her least and justify her most if we make an end ? "

No doubt he would answer several things it would be unpleasant to hear ; unquestionably the alternative is horrid, but, for all that, I know of no other course that would leave less ultimate regret. No one would resort to this expedient for trivial reasons, so strong would its demands be on both courage and conviction. The seriousness of the alternative will test the strength of your desire for freedom.

Many men have intervals of dismay when they contemplate all the responsibilities that attach to marriage ; these may mean panic rather than regret, and may envisage the conditions rather than the individual ; they are most frequent where finances are unsatisfactory. Intervals of cold reflection are not necessarily of fatal augury, but they are not aids to happiness ; and when they recur too frequently they are like rockets at sea, not holiday fireworks, but signals of distress that cannot be disregarded with impunity. With good wishes,

I remain,
Your friend,
AMICA



The Song Divine

THREE'S music, music everywhere,
In earth and sky and sea,
To souls attuned to rare response
Of mystic melody.
Each life is one essential note
In some celestial song;
So strike thy note on earth that it
Ring clear, and true, and strong
With vibrant echoes that shall fill
Some chord else incomplete
In that eternal symphony
That surges round His feet.

There's music in each inmost heart
Which as we set it free
Resolves life's discords into one
Transcendent harmony,
Merging in that exhaustless song
That was, and is, will be:
That wave of sound that breaks in one
Supreme doxology.
To swell that mighty chant glad soul
Make thou thy constant aim:
Redeem thy voiceless years, and know
Thy silence were thy shame.

GRACE HARTMANS.



LIFE is a building. It rises slowly day by day, through the years. Every experience, every touch of another life on ours, every influence that impresses us, every conversation we have, every act of our commonest days, adds something to the invisible building.—J. R. MILLER.

"I Am the Way"

WE do not know when or where the wave of trouble is to sweep up against us as a great roller suddenly heaves up out of a tranquil sea; but just because of such awful surprises we build in cloudless days where the flood can never reach us, high up on the rock. That is the message of Jesus to many a life which wants to hear of other things, as the disciples wanted to know of that which Jesus did not reveal. Many a mystery of life and death is undisclosed by Him, many a prolem which distracts the mind is left unanswered; but along the way He opens moves for ever the hope and peace of man. Not knowing whither we are going, we take our life and duty just as they come; and across all the uncertainties of joy and trouble, and achievement and regret, and life and death, that may await us, the voice of Jesus calls, "I am the Way!"—DR. F. G. PEABODY.



Prevailing Prayer

THE river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigoroussness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted by little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full

THE QUIVER

and useful channels. So is a man's prayer. If it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven ; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift notion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermedial regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment (Eph. vi. 18).—
JEREMY TAYLOR.



Found in the Harvest Field

A PASTOR once had occasion to visit one of his flock, who was a farmer on a spiritual errand. On arriving at the farmhouse the minister inquired whether his parishioner was at home. " You will find him in the harvest-field ! " was the reply. And so it proved. The busy farmer, making hay while the sun shone, improving the opportune weather for the ingathering of the matured crops, was discovered at the post of duty, losing no precious moments in gossip, idling, or mischief-making.

" Found in the harvest-field ! " That is the true description of a faithful Christian labourer. The harvest, since the days of Him Who walked through the grain-fields and olive orchards of Galilee and Judæa, has been plenteous, and the call for labourers is incessant. Every convert is charged with the reaping of some portion of this great and growing harvest. Nowhere in the vineyard of the Lord is there any place for an idler or a shirker. The post of duty, occasionally the point of danger, but always the glorious arena, is the harvest-field.



Are you Willing?

A LADY was once in great difficulties about certain things which she felt eager to keep under her own control. Her friend, wistful to press her into the better life of consecration, placed before her a blank sheet of paper, and pressed her to write her name at the foot, and then lay it before God in prayer. She did so, and at once entered this blessed life.

Are you willing to do this ? Are you prepared to sign your name to a blank sheet of paper, and then hand it over to God for Him to fill in as He pleases ? If not, ask Him to make you willing and able to do this and all things else. You will

never be happy until you let the Lord Jesus keep the house of your nature, closely scrutinising every visitor and admitting only His friends. He must reign. He must have all or none. He must have the key of every room.

Do not try to make them fit for Him. Simply give Him the key. He will cleanse and renovate and make beautiful. Directly you give He takes. Directly you open the door He enters. Directly you roll back the flood gates He pours in a glorious tide of fulness : fulness of wealth, of power, of joy.

The clay has only to be plastic to the hand of a Palissy. The marble has only to be pliant to the chisel of a Michael Angelo.—
REV. F. B. MEYER.



Christmas

*THE silent skies are full of speech
For who hath ears to hear ;
The winds are whispering each to each,
The moon is calling to the beach,
And stars their sacred wisdom teach
Of faith and love and fear.*

*But once the sky the silence broke,
And song o'erflowed the earth ;
The midnight air with glory shook,
And angels mortal language spoke,
When God our human nature took
In Christ, the Saviour's birth.*

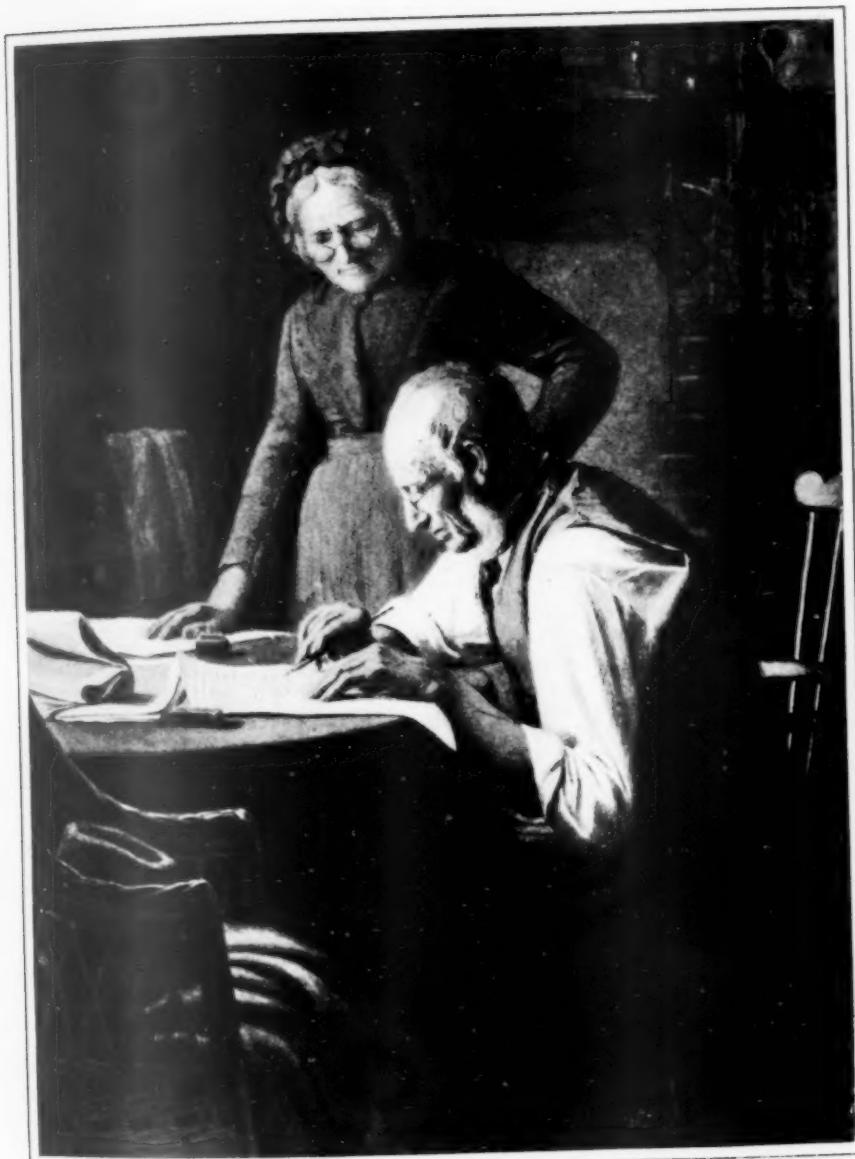
*And Christmas once is Christmas still ;
The gates through which He came,
And forests wild and murmuring rill,
And fruitful field and breezy hill,
And all that else the wide world fill
Are vocal with His name.*

*Shall we not listen while they sing
This latest Christmas morn ;
And music hear in everything,
And faithful lives in tribute bring
To the great song which greets the King,
Who comes when Christ is born ?*

PHILLIPS BROOKS.



JOY is for all men. It does not depend on circumstance or condition ; if it did, it could only be for the few. It is not the fruit of good luck, or of fortune, or even of outward success, which all men cannot have. It is of the soul, or the soul's character ; it is the wealth of the soul's own being, when it is filled with the spirit of Jesus, which is the spirit of eternal love.—
HORACE BUSHNELL.



SIGNING THE OLD AGE PENSION PAPERS.

(From the Painting by H. S. Tazier.)

Dick Smiley's Love Letter

A Complete Story

By A. B. COOPER

"MY, an' a silly gobbin Aw must ha' bin!" And Dick Smiley snatched a letter roughly from his little wife's hands and held it up derisively to the gaslight.

"Tha' didn't think so then, Dick. Yo' used to say mony a time as I wur yo'r wench an' yo'd ne'er gie o'er lovin' me."

"Ay, Aw see Aw start loike that—' My own little wench'—By gum! Aw must ha' bin drunk."

"Nay, lad. It's only sin' tha's got wi' yon bad lot as tha's done that. Tha'd ha' bin shamed to show th' face afore me i' those days, but now—"

The poor woman stopped with an air of despair. She knew only too well the terrible change which had come over Dick. In the days of their courtship there was not a steadier fellow in the place, and even when he was as black as a nigger minstrel with the grime of the pit she thought him the handsomest man on earth. But now both she and their two little ones knew the difference. Dick Smiley had seemed to change entirely, and the change was summarised in one word—drink.

Some men are like wild beasts when drunk, and like doves when sober. But Dick Smiley was neither the one nor the other. He had once or twice knocked his wife about and "clouted" the children; but, as a rule, a little drink made him sarcastic, and much drink made him insulting. And the meeker his wife was, the bitterer his tongue would grow. And, on the other hand, even when sober he was not the man of old. His whole character seemed to have deteriorated, and it seemed as though only a great inward upheaval would ever bring it to its former level.

All day Mrs. Smiley had been hungering for a bit of the old love. Oh, for a word, a look, a touch, a smile! She felt as though she would give untold worlds to feel again those grimy strong arms about her neck,

and have that coal-black face against her own sadly thin cheek. She might be a collier's wife, but she had her feelings, and they were just as womanly as if she had been a duchess—perhaps more.

She had been turning over the bottom drawer, looking for something for the baby, when out of a far corner she had raked one of the very few letters Dick had ever written to her. It was during a temporary absence—a holiday probably—that he had written this letter, just to let his sweetheart know that a holiday without her was no holiday at all for him, and that he was just longing to get back to her.

How eagerly she read the ill-spelt, ill-written epistle! The magical prose of a Ruskin, the witchery of a Tennyson, could never have touched the fountain of tears as those uncouth expressions of a rough miner's devotion touched the secret places of her nature. She had bedewed the old letter with her tears.

Oh, waste love of woman—what avails your tears! Dash them from your eyes and harden your heart like adamant. Spurn the man who spurns you. What does he care for the rich jewel of your deathless love? Is it worth while to be faithful unto the end?

"Perhaps," she had thought, as she knelt beside the open drawer, "if I show him this, he'll remember what he used to be, and—" Just then little Maggie came toddling into the room. "What hoo findin', mammy?"

"Summat bonny, my honey, summat gradey bonny."

And now she looked, with sinking heart, into the scornful, sarcastic face of her husband. A stranger would not have seen the expression, so black was Dick Smiley's face, but the eyes of his wife could look through the coal-dust. To her a black face was almost normal. He laughed at his own love letter. "Aw mun ha' bin a silly

DICK SMILEY'S LOVE LETTER

"gobbin," he said, and he thrust it into the pocket of his trousers. "It'll do to light my pipe wi'," he added.

* * * * *

Dick Smiley was lying on his side working with his pick at a narrow seam. His safety lamp stood at his feet, and shed a faint light over the gloomy, vault-like space a thousand feet below the place where the daisies grow and the brooks sing their lullaby. Perhaps, after all, the marvel is that coal miners are the good fellows they are, brave as lions and true as steel, when the nature of their daily—or is it nightly?—work is considered. One would expect a farmer to have some sunshine in his nature, but a miner might be excused for occasional gloom, or even for a Mephistophelian temper, seeing that he spends so much of his time in a pit of darkness.

Certainly Dick Smiley was feeling anything but sweet. He had gone out after the episode of the letter, and had put some more drink on the top of what he had had already, with the consequence that he had gone home like a raging lion, and had struck his wife, even though she had the baby in her arms.

Yet in the morning he had found his "baggin'" nicely tied up for him, and his "tay" ready in his can. But he was in no humour to feel grateful or sorry. Anger against himself had made him morose and bitter, and now, lying in the narrow gallery, with the rock roof within a foot of his head, he felt mad against himself and all the world. He was in a nasty state of mind.

Suddenly there was a thunderous roar, as though the foundations of the earth had given way—a creaking and rending of timber, and then the heavy, rattling, rumbling sound of falling coal. A smother of dust came rolling up the narrow gallery in which Dick Smiley was working, making his lamp jump and flicker and almost die out.

Dick struggled round—still in a reclining position, for there was not room to rise until he should have crawled some dozen yards—and clutched the ring of his lamp. He knew very well what the sound meant. Even yet there were recurring sounds, like the little peals that follow in the wake of a tremendous thunder-clap, as though they were sorry to cease. Yes, there was no doubt that a "fall" had occurred in the workings.

But where was it, and what did it mean for him? He knew that there was not another man within thirty yards of him, and he knew, too, from the direction and intensity of the sound, that the fall had occurred not very far away.

But he was scarcely prepared for the dreadful discovery he made. After crawling out of the very low working in which he had been lying he came into a sort of chamber where he could almost stand upright. It was filled with choking coal-dust, but a miner is accustomed to that, and its chief importance to Dick Smiley was its indication of the nearness of the fall.

His lamp only pierced the gloom of this subterranean chamber for the merest fraction of a yard ahead, and, ere he knew it, Dick stumbled over huge masses of mingled rock and coal strewn in chaotic ruin at his feet. He lifted his lamp above his head, so as to make the most of its dim flicker, and as he did so his heart sank within him. He knew that he was not only a prisoner in a living tomb, but that he was alone!

A man does not give way to despair all in a minute. He keeps thinking that some miracle will happen, or that something will turn up, or that he will find some means of escape which no one ever thought of before. Dick was no exception to the rule. He went back for his pick, and then examined the fallen mass to see what hope there was of getting through.

As well might a mouse try to escape from a steel trap; as well might the gazelle try to escape from the jaws of the lion. Stronger fetters these than ever bound a prisoner in Portland or Princeton. Dick Smiley, you may sit down, and quietly and serenely wait for death!

Of course, they would try to get at him, but they might be days and days about it, and might even give up the task as hopeless. After all, it was not as if fifty men were entombed. It was very probable that he was the only one. Would they think his life worth saving?

Presently he began to realise that he was hungry as well as dreadfully thirsty. Ah! that cold tea would be nectar, and those sandwiches and buttered buns his little wife had put up for him would taste like ambrosia.

Dick knew nothing about the food or drink of the gods, but he knew that back

THE QUIVER

where he had been working there was a red cotton kerchief containing human food, and a tin can containing cold tea. Cold tea ! What poor, despicable stuff ! Yet Dick Smiley only took his lips away when the sudden and horrid question arose in his mind : " Where will you get your next drink, Dick Smiley ? "

Ay, where ? He sat down on a lump of fallen rock and opened his " baggin' ". He could have eaten the lot there and then, but that last question had startled him. This might be the only food he would have for a week—perhaps for ever.

He ate sparingly, and wrapped the rest up carefully again and set it in a corner. Then he worked—he knew not how long—at the mass of stuff which formed his prison bars. If it did nothing else, it occupied his mind and flattered him with hopes of release.

Tired out, he stretched himself on the grimy floor and, with a " cob " of coal for his pillow, like Jacob of old, fell asleep.

But he saw no angelic ladder in his dreams—not even a cage, ascending and descending, to and from this horrible pit, to take him into the light of day once more. But he did dream that an angel visited him. It was Mary, his little wife. But not the Mary he knew to-day ; another and transformed Mary—the sort of Mary she used to be when he went a-courting, only with a motherly, mature air he had never seen before. And ah, what a sweet smile she had !

When he awoke he put out his hand to touch his wife. The dream had made so deep an impression upon his mind that it seemed real. His hand came in contact with a lump of rough coal, and recollection rushed back, bringing with it the first touch of despair.

He sat up and searched around for his lamp, which he relit. Whether it was day or night he knew not. It was all night to him. He was hungry again, but he hardly dared to eat ; thirsty, but he hardly dared to drink. No little wife to make his breakfast here, to make him some toast and grill a bloater for him !

Then, to drive away despair, he worked again with his pick. It seemed almost like picking at the solid globe. He rested and sipped a drop of cold tea and ate a sandwich. Presently, he leaned back against the wall of his prison and thrust his hands into his pockets with a despairing sort of abandon.

Haloo ! What's this ? He pulled his right hand quickly out of his pocket, bringing with it a piece of paper that showed like a star in a pitch-dark night. Its whiteness looked almost uncanny.

" By gum ! " said Dick aloud, " it's that theer letter wot Mary fun' ." He was devoured now with curiosity to read it. It seemed like the only thing that belonged to the real world of life and movement, of light and—ah, yes—and *love*.

Almost tenderly he held the sheet of paper in his grimy hands to the dim flicker of his lamp—that lamp which, like his own life, was slowly but surely waning.

" My own Little Wench," he read, and at the very first words a great surge of irrepressible emotion blinded his eyes. Not another word could he see. But he rubbed his knuckles into his eyes and held the paper again to the light. " I've only just getten hear, but I wish I wer back agmean, my lass. I find nowt loks bonny unless you are by my side. I wish you an' me was marrid, lass, so as we could allus be together. I love you better than any lass in all th' world, an' I keep thinkin' o' th' last kiss yo' gav me afore I started off. I wish yo' wer hear to gie me another. Well, when we marrid, lass, nowt 'll come between us, an' I'll be a gradely good husband to thee.

" The rose is red, the viletts blue,
The pink is sweet, an' so are you."

" Your ever luying,
" DICK."

It took him a long time to read this letter, what with the flickering light and the tears which would have blurred letters a foot high. But it was the best cleansing his heart had had for a long time. He was bowed down with penitence and remorse, and forgot his own sorrows in the thought of the sorrow and disappointment and disillusion he had brought into his little wife's life.

Oh, if only he could see her again she should know that he was not past redemption. A good husband, indeed ! " My God," he said, " but Aw've bin nobbut a wastrel ! I'll mak' it up to her if ever Aw get hawf a chance. Hoo's a real good soort, an' as patient as a lamb. An' little Maggie—bless her heart !—hoo said on'y last neet—last neet ! perhaps it wer last wik—as hoo wanted to kiss me, an' Aw gav' her a shove.



"Tenderly he held the sheet of paper in his grimy hands."

Aw desarve to die in a hole. Aw'm no good to nob'dy."

Hark ! What's that ? Pick ! Pick ! Pick ! Dick jumped to his feet, and, thrusting four grimy fingers into his mouth, raised a whistle of which a locomotive would not have been ashamed. Presently, but as though from a great distance, came an answering whistle, and then—Pick ! Pick ! Pick ! again, like the ticking of the clock of hope.

Twelve hours later the news went like wildfire round the town that the imprisoned man would be released that day, and men, women and children assembled in a vast crowd to see him brought to the surface. Yet, despite the crowd, there was only one face for Dick Smiley. Standing on the pit bank, in solitary glory, was Mary, the little wife, with her baby in her arms and little Maggie clinging wonderingly to her skirts.

Two men helped Dick out of the cage, but, as he placed his feet on mother-earth again, he shook them off, staggered forward, and clutched his wife and babe to his heart in one comprehensive hug, while little Maggie embraced his nearest leg.

"Thank God ! My husband's back !" cried Mary.

"Ay, lass," said the rescued man, "but not th' same husband. It's a new mon tha's getten' to-day, my bonny wench. Aw read my own letter as yo' fun' t'other day, daan i' th' darkness an' lonesomeness, an' it broke my heart. God helping me, Mary, I'll keep th' promise Aw made in it—Aw will that ! "

"Tha'rt allus mine, lad," murmured Mary, and Dick lifted up little Maggie and kissed her. "Tha's geet a brand-new daddy, little 'un," he said.





CHRISTMAS FARE

By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR

THE happy festival of the Birthday of the Blessed Babe draws near, and it is high time for the housewife who values her reputation for having "everything just right" to be up and doing. The oils of the metaphorical "wheels" of the household—method and forethought—must be applied, and the train of preparations put in motion, in order that the busy season of Christmas may be enjoyed in comfort by each member of the family.

Holiday times are always a crucial test of the manner in which a house is "run." This year the test will be more than ordinarily severe, for the 25th falls on a Saturday, and the caterer must excise all her skill and ingenuity to determine to a nicety what provisions her family will require for three whole days, with a due regard to variety and avoiding waste. There is only one way of ensuring this, and that is to have all one's plans "cut and dried" quite a couple of weeks in advance. Choose a quiet hour when, safe from interruption and armed with price lists, cookery book, and note-book and pencil, the plans can be formulated and the extent of all liabilities estimated. It is a good idea to write the menus for the various meals on one side of the note-book, and a detailed list of the ingredients required for each dish on the opposite page. This enables one to see at a glance how the ingredients for one will work in with those for another, and ensures a maximum of variety with the least expenditure of money and trouble.

In these days of restless bustle, however,

there are many women who, either from choice, thoughtlessness, or compulsion, leave everything till the last minute, and for the benefit of these—though in the first two cases they certainly deserve neither help nor sympathy—I have drawn up a menu which does not require a vast amount of preparation. I have purposely kept it simple and, for the most part, within the capabilities of the average "general," and the dinners can be easily elaborated by the addition of soup, fish, an entrée, or savoury, if desired.

Christmas Day

Breakfast.—Scrambled eggs, cold ham.

Dinner.—Stuffed roast turkey, sausages, bread sauce. Brussels sprouts, potatoes. Plum pudding, custard sauce, lemon jelly. Dessert, chocolates, crackers, &c.

Supper.—Mutton cutlets, chip potatoes, tomato scallop. Mince-pies. Cheese straws.

Sunday

Breakfast.—Finnan-haddocks, boiled eggs.

Dinner.—Roast beef, horseradish sauce. Baked potatoes, broccoli. Slices of plum pudding (some fried, some cold). "Everyday" trifle. Dessert.

Supper.—Cold turkey and ham. Beetroot and celery salad. Fruit cake. Anchovy eggs.

Monday (Bank Holiday)

Breakfast.—Ham toast, sardines.

Lunch.—Cold beef. Beetroot. Potatoes baked in their skins. Irish stew. Hot and cold mince-pies.

THE HOME DEPARTMENT

Dinner.—Tomato soup. Curried turkey. Boiled rice. Sponge jelly. Creamed fish savoury.

Tuesday

Breakfast.—Kippers, potted meat.

Now for details. The ham should be selected several days in advance, and most of the large shops and stores undertake the cooking without additional charge. If a whole ham is too expensive or too large, half or even a quarter can be bought. A piece of gammon of bacon weighing from 6 to 8 lb. makes a good substitute.

Here is a list of things that can be purchased at the same time as the ham: Eggs (fresh and cooking), a large tin of tomatoes, tin of apricots, sardines, Patna rice, a quart lemon jelly square, cooking butter, lard and flour (for pastry), Parmesan cheese (for cheese straws), onions, potatoes, fruit and nuts (for dessert), a shilling Madeira cake, six penny sponges (stale), potted meat, and anchovy sauce. I take it for granted that the plum puddings and mincemeat are already made.

The best turkeys will be on the market on Tuesday and Wednesday, and it is well to secure one early and ask the poultreter to reserve and send it up on Christmas Eve. In choosing a bird, remember that a young turkey-cock, which is best for roasting, has smooth black legs, full bright eyes, and soft, pliable feet. For boiling, a hen turkey is considered better. There are many different kinds of stuffing for roast turkey, that most generally used being the same as for veal. I give two recipes, both of which are uncommon and delicious.

Stuffing of Onions and Pickled Pork

Scald two dozen small white onions and boil them in a little stock with 1 lb. of pickled pork cut in thin slices, a bunch of herbs, two cloves, pepper and salt. When cooked, drain, take out the herbs and cloves, and mince the other ingredients together, adding a few breadcrumbs. Put the stuffing in the turkey, and roast as usual. The following sauce should be sent to table with the bird. Put 1 oz. of butter in a small saucepan, and when it has melted add a slice of minced lean ham, two shallots, and a few button mushrooms. Stand the pan at the side of the stove, and let it simmer for a little while. Add four tablespoonfuls of stock,

simmer for half an hour, then put through a sieve. Just before sending to table add a teaspoonful of made mustard, a sprinkle of cayenne, and salt.

Sausage and Chestnut Stuffing

Boil forty chestnuts, and when cooked remove the outer and inner skins. Put them in a mortar and pound. Add 1 lb. of sausages (free from skin), and, if liked, the turkey liver chopped. Mix all together thoroughly, and season with pepper and salt.

The greater part of the shopping has been done, and that left for Christmas Eve consists of orders for sausages, neck of mutton (for cutlets and Irish stew), beef, dried fish (finnan-haddocks and kippers), ingredients for turkey stuffing, and sprouts, broccoli, beetroots, celery, horseradish, and cream.

"Every-day" Trifle

"Every-day" trifle is a favourite sweet and wholesome for children. Take half a dozen stale sponge cakes, split, and put a layer of jam between each. Soak with a little raisin wine, or milk flavoured with a few drops of vanilla or lemon essence. Blanch a few of the dessert almonds, cut them in strips, and stick them all over the cakes. Take a thick custard made with a pint of milk and three eggs, flavour, and when nearly cold pour over the cakes.

N.B.—This dish can be made on Christmas morning when the custard sauce for the plum pudding is being prepared, the extra quantity of milk and eggs being added.

Fruit Cake

Put the contents of a tin of apricots into a lined saucepan with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of castor sugar, and let the fruit simmer until quite tender; then lift it out on to a plate. Add more sugar to the juice, and boil hard until the syrup is thick. Remove the centre from a Madeira cake, and pour the syrup, spoonful by spoonful, over the ring until it is thoroughly soaked, but not broken. Then put the fruit in the open centre, whip some cream, and pile it on top of the fruit and cake. Decorate with *glacé* cherries and tiny strips of angelica. If liked, a small glass of liqueur may be added to the syrup and chopped nuts or grated cocoanut whipped in with the cream.

THE QUIVER

Sponge Jelly

This sweet is made from the remains of the lemon jelly and the centre of the Madeira cake. Re-liquefy what is left of the jelly and crumble the cake into it. Stir until it begins to set (if not, the cake will settle at the bottom of the mould), then pour into a mould that has been decorated with cup-up pieces of crystallised fruit left from dessert.

The cheese straws can be made at the same time as the pastry for the mince-pies, and re-heated when required.

When boiling the eggs for breakfast on Sunday, hard-boil four extra for the supper savoury. When cold, cut in halves, take out the yolks, and pound them with a little butter and anchovy sauce. Pile the filling in the whites and arrange them on a dish garnished with parsley or watercress.

For the ham toast take $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of chopped ham, put it in a stewpan with two tablespoonfuls of stock, one of milk, and season with cayenne and grated nutmeg. When thoroughly hot, pour over hot buttered toast.

Half a tin of tomatoes will suffice for the scalloped tomatoes which are served with the mutton cutlets, and the remainder should be put through a sieve, turned into a basin, and kept for the soup.

Take the bones from the dried haddock left from breakfast and reserve the fish for the savoury. Devilled sardines could be substituted for this dish if preferred.

There are various ways of using up cold

turkey, any of which could replace the proposed curry.

Minced Turkey

The trimmings of a large carcase will make a delicious mince. To each pound of minced turkey allow 1 oz. of finely chopped ham and the same quantity of onion. Fry in a little clarified dripping with $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of flour sprinkled over. To this add $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of stock made from the bones; season with salt and pepper and, if liked, a dash of lemon juice. The mince may be served simply garnished with *croûtons* (little pieces of fried bread), with or without poached eggs. It may also be used as a filling for patty cases or allowed to get cold; it can be shaped into cutlets, rolled in egg and breadcrumbs, and fried, or is a delicious stuffing for grilled rolls of bacon.

Devilled Turkey Legs

Put 1 oz. of butter in a saucepan, and when melted add a tablespoonful of made mustard, a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper, and salt to taste. (Some people add a little curry powder or paste.) Divide the legs at the joint, take off the skin, and make several incisions lengthways in the meat. Rub in the devilling mixture with the back of a teaspoon. Dust with cayenne, and squeeze lemon juice over. Place on a buttered grid-iron and cook over a clear fire. Serve very hot with a piece of butter on each joint. The last pickings of the turkey and ham may be potted, and the bones of both provide excellent stock for soups.

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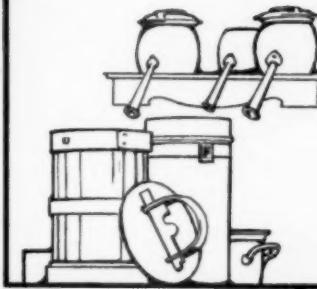
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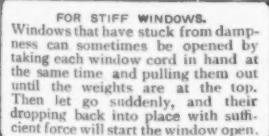


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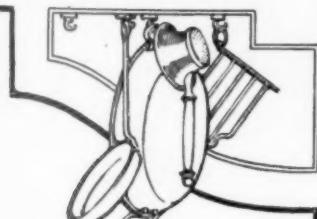


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Windows that have stuck from dampness can sometimes be opened by taking each window cord in hand at the same time and pulling them out until the weights are at the top. Then let go suddenly, and their dropping back into place with sufficient force will start the window open.



TO RENOVATE GILT FRAMES.

A small sponge wrung out thoroughly in spirits of wine and applied to a gilt frame will make it look like new. Leave the frame to dry of itself. Do not attempt to wipe it, or streaks will be the result.

THE QUIVER

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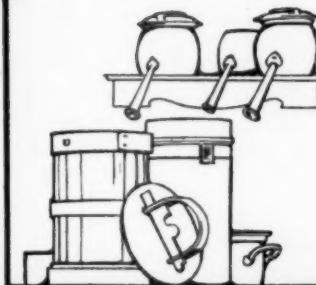
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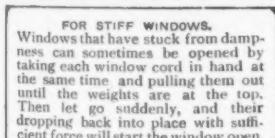
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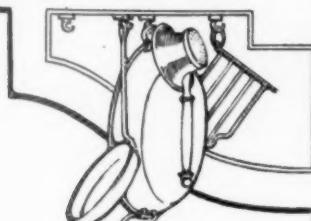
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CONVERSATION CORNER

Conducted by
The Editor

Christmastide

IN presenting the Christmas Number of our magazine, I should like, first of all, to express to my readers my best wishes for a happy Christmastide. These wishes have been so often passed on that the expression has become well-worn and hackneyed; but that does not matter in the least if the spirit of Christmastide is behind the words and the message comes from the heart. I feel, and you feel, that the link between the Editor and the readers of THE QUIVER is a much closer one than usually exists in the case of ordinary magazines. I have been cheered beyond measure by the kind messages I have been receiving from my readers in all parts of the world.



Some Words of Appreciation

CHRISTMASTIDE permits of a little more latitude than usual for the expression of good wishes, so perhaps I may be allowed to quote from some of the kind messages that have reached me. One reader, for instance, writes: "THE QUIVER is a monthly pleasure in this household. Maybe you will be surprised to hear that when we were children we saved up for Christmas to buy a bound copy of THE QUIVER as a present to mother. Then we were 'set up' for months. She read to us on wet Sundays, or when we were too poorly to go to church. The bound volumes were most carefully covered with brown paper, and only had out on birthdays and Sundays, so a kind of veneration grew around them."

Another reader writes: "THE QUIVER was a family magazine in our home as long as I can remember, and I would like to say a great big 'Thank you' for all the delightful reading contained therein. I think it perfect, and have always done so."

"I have taken THE QUIVER for seventeen years," says another reader, "and always find it most helpful and instructive. As for the Christmas Number, no Christmas Day, however busy or occupied, passes without my reading it in the evening." And so on.

Thank You!

MANY more might be quoted, but space will not allow. May I most sincerely thank my correspondents for their good wishes? As one of them well remarks, "I am writing to you all this because I read the other day what pleasure it gave Arnold-Forster to know people liked the books he wrote, and maybe you will like to know of one person to whom the coming of THE QUIVER is a bit of real pleasure." Editors, writers, and artists—we all are the better for a kindly word of appreciation, and I should like to say how glad I shall be to receive from time to time a word of commendation when you are pleased with any particular story or article, or a suggestion as to what you would like to see in THE QUIVER, or a criticism of any feature you would like to see altered!



From One Another

IN this interchange of good wishes I am sure I may include the good wishes of readers for one another. Especially will all our hearts go out to those to whom Christmastide brings haunting memories of dear ones gone. One of my correspondents speaks pathetically of "the wounds and the scars which time cannot heal, the empty homes, and the sadness from which such anniversaries as Christmas are inseparable." The readers of THE QUIVER wish one another a happy Christmastide.



Helps to Happiness

MY readers do not need to be reminded that the best way to ensure a happy Christmas is to help others. The long record of practical philanthropy and generosity established by the readers of THE QUIVER is sufficient to prove this. I have been much gratified during the past few months to find that the membership of the League of Loving Hearts is still growing. Every week I receive numbers of letters from all parts of the world enclosing the shilling entrance

CONVERSATION CORNER

fee. I have just divided the amount sent in during the past six months, and have sent a nice little cheque to each of the ten societies for which we are working. Now, I want to make a Christmas appeal to all my readers. If you have not already joined the League, will you send in the coupon (to be found in the advertisement section), with one shilling? If you are already a member, and have not sent a renewal subscription during 1909, will you send at least a shilling for this purpose? I want to give a Christmas surprise to each of the secretaries of the ten societies, and I want, too, each one of my readers, when you all unite in the Christmas festivities, to have the joy and gladness which comes from knowing you have helped these good causes. A shilling seems a very small amount, especially when divided among ten institutions; but do you know that if every member of the League sent a renewal subscription of this amount I should have £150—or £15 for each society! But if each reader of *THE QUIVER* were to send a shilling I should be able to forward to each of the societies a cheque for about £500!



A Light to the Blind

THE ten societies benefiting by the League of Loving Hearts are well-known institutions, doing a national work. Their claims need no advocacy. But there are other societies one comes across doing a quiet, much-needed work on a smaller scale. These are apt to be lost sight of, because they cannot advertise or make extensive appeals. Shall I be trespassing too much on the generosity of my readers if I make a Christmas appeal for one or two of these? First of all, there is the Home Teaching Society for the Blind. This valuable institution has been established for fifty-three years, and has a staff of fifteen blind teachers, who regularly visit 1,912 blind people with the object of teaching them to read and understand the Holy Scriptures. The Lord Bishop of London is one of the vice-presidents and heartily commends the work. The secretary is Miss E. Bainbrigge, 53, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., and I shall be pleased to forward any sums my readers may subscribe.



From the Heights of Lebanon

IT is a far cry from work among the blind in England to hospital work in Syria, but I should like to call the attention of my readers to an institution doing splendid

service at Mount Lebanon, so well known to all Bible readers for its cedars. It is always tragic when a person loses his reason, or suffers some mental derangement. In our own country such persons are cared for and properly treated, but in such a country as Syria there is absolutely no provision for the insane, except such as is made by voluntary and Christian effort. The Lebanon Hospital for the Insane is connected with no missionary society or denomination, but has to rely for support on general Christian charity. It is doing an isolated but very Christ-like work—trying to imitate the Master Himself when He cast out the demons from the man possessed. I have been reading a most interesting report of the work, showing that cases from all parts of Palestine and Syria have been treated, and treated with success. Would any of my readers like to help this noble work? The London offices of the Hospital are at 35, Queen Victoria Street, but I shall be pleased to forward any amounts that may be sent. Funds for any charitable work may be sent to The Editor, *THE QUIVER*, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C. They will be acknowledged in the advertisement section month by month.



A Unique Gift-book

IT is always a problem to know what are the best gifts for the little ones at Christmastime. I have much pleasure in recommending what I believe to be the latest, the brightest, and the best picture-book annual for children, "Cassell's Annual for Boys and Girls." It has been compiled by the editor of *Little Folks* and *Tiny Tots*, who is obviously in the best position in the world to know and provide for the requirements of young people. Nothing to compare with it has ever been published before, for it contains well over 100 colour pictures, and a large number of black-and-white drawings by the best artists who devote themselves to the entertainment of children. The colour pictures have been beautifully printed by a new and expensive process, with results that are far in advance of anything hitherto attempted in this line. The volume also contains about 80 stories and verses by all the favourite contributors to *Little Folks* and *Tiny Tots*. It is, therefore, a unique gift-book either for Christmas or for birthdays.

The Editor

Long Complete Story

Daphne Adair's Wedding

By ETHEL F. HEDDLE

Author of "The Beloved Physician," "Colina's Island," Etc.

CHAPTER I

THE DAY BEFORE

(Told by the Bride)

I THINK I was the happiest girl in all England ! I wonder if every girl thinks so, the day before her wedding !

But then she could not possibly feel *quite* so happy—how stupid I am!—because she could not have been going to marry Amyas Carew ! And then it was twenty years ago, and I think people are not so simple-minded nowadays. They expect a very great deal from life, for one thing; and they rush about so, and work so hard at pleasure and amusing themselves, that they require rest cures ! But there ! I must not moralise, or ruminate, but get on to the day before my wedding.

The dress had come ! The dress of her life above all others, to a woman, be she young or old, rich or poor, simple or clever. I had laid it on my little white bed, with the snowy veil, the little white satin shoes, the silk stockings, and wreath of orange blossom, and of course I did not mean to try it on, till poor lame old Betty, our house-keeper, entreated me to let her see me in it ! Then I wavered ! Dear Betty had nursed my mother, and she shook her head over all foolish superstitions about ill luck.

"Bless your dear heart, child," she said, "no ill can come to anyone so good as the Rector and so sweet as you ! Let an old woman's eyes be gladdened by the sight of the sweetest and fairest bride in broad England, before she closes them for ever !"

And so I consented. How could I refuse ?

Father was out, and would be late,

and Amyas had said he would look in about tea-time. There would be just time to please old Betty.

I raced out into the garden and gathered a great handful of white roses. Not scentless labelled roses, the aristocracy of the garden—the Squire and I were too poor to replace our roses with fine, high-bred things—but a great cluster of a climbing rose, that used to peep into my bedroom window, and wake me with a "good-morning" of tapping leaves and sprays on the lattice. 'Twas for my bouquet ! Then I slipped on the lovely snowy satin skirt (my first satin or silk dress, for the Squire and I were *very* poor), and I put on the wreath, with fingers that shook a little, happily, and then threw the veil over my head. Then I took up the train and my roses, and walked carefully, lest I should trip, down the corridor and on to the shallow oak staircase. All our Adair ancestors, with their wives, were looking down on me from the walls, and I thought they smiled quite affectionately—even the cruel old colonel, who had been one of Lord Jeffreys' chief aiders and abettors in the bad old times. As for his wife, gentle Lady Griselda, I felt that she wanted to kiss me—because I had no mother—and wish me well. And so I progressed into the dark old hall, and along to Betty's room. I gave a little knock, and the rheumatic old woman seated by the fire said, "Come in."

She did start and drop her knitting when she saw me !

I sailed in, as if I were in church, and up before her, and she lifted her eyes and her hands.



"I took up the train and my roses, and walked carefully down the shallow oak staircase. All our ancestors were looking down on me from the walls, and I thought they smiled quite affectionately."

THE QUIVER

"Oh, my darling!" she said. "Oh, my dear lovely little lady! It is your mother over again, Miss Daphne, your dear mother!"

She looked at everything then—my dress, my veil, my mother's pearl pendant, my gloves, even the real lace on my petticoat, and the buckle on my little shoes. There never had been such a bride in the village church, she said, never—never! And then she made me sit down on the old leather couch just for a minute.

"It is as if a white summer cloud were in the room, dear heart," she said. "And a bright light everywhere! Let me see you there, and then, when you are at the Rectory, and your dear father and I and Dinah must live without you, I will shut my eyes in the dark and see you sitting there. Always a bride!"

"Smell my roses!" I said, putting them in her stiff old hands. "Smell my roses, Betty!"

Ah! It is good to be young and happy! To feel love everywhere all around you, like enveloping arms, to feel yourself far from all pain and dread! Never to have known fear! And I was never to know just quite that feeling again, so long as I lived, after that day!

She buried her nose in my roses.

"Somehow, dear heart," she said, "roses like these always take me back to the Rector's grandmother! You know she was painted by a great artist just before she went out to India—for the last terrible time—with white roses in her lap? Poor soul! Ah, poor, poor soul!"

"His grandmother?" I repeated. "Why, Betty, I never heard him mention his grandmother!"

She shook her head again.

"They never did, Miss Daphne," she said. "It was too terrible! You know she was in the Mutiny. I knew her, and I heard all the tragic story. Her son, the Rector's father, who had been sent home a delicate baby, the year before, could never bear to hear it mentioned. She was a mere child, only nineteen, when it all happened." She stopped and sighed. "They had taken refuge somewhere, she and her husband, and about a dozen English. One by one they were all killed. For three days they kept up a desperate fight. Food failed, and water and ammunition. They had put

the bodies of the dead as a breastwork. The one man left—her husband was long dead—fell pierced by a dozen bullets. He was stripped to the waist, and had nothing but his sword. She was the only woman left. The bloodthirsty fiends poured in, but she was hidden under the dead. At night she crept out into the sleeping city. My dear, she saw horrible sights, the mutilated bodies of her friends! She recognised them, and told all this to an Englishman lying wounded in a corner, who bade her fly on. Then he saw a native woman seize her arm, and drag her into a palace. They knew no more—they never knew more! She was never heard of again! She had jewels on her, rich jewels in a belt round her waist. She told the friend that. They were never heard of! She may have been taken to a native harem. Better if she had died! No, it is a ghastly story. A sad, terrible story! There were many such, in those blood-red days, for England to read—and try to forget!"

There, in the little cosy room, I shuddered. Now I remembered that Amyas had once shown me her miniature, and, sighing, put it away. He said he would tell me her story—"one day." I scarcely let myself think of it now—I only half listened.

"But I should not be telling such things to-day, dear heart," Betty said. "You must go and change, for the Rector will be coming in. He has his grandmother's beautiful dark eyes. Yes, and her gentle, taking manner. She had a touch of pride, too, the little way of a queen—they say it is a way Indian ladies get—as if she had only to speak, and things were done. But there is the bell! And I keep you talking here! One kiss, dear heart, to the little bride. Just one kiss!"

I stooped and kissed Betty, and I could see my figure in the old mirror over the mantelpiece as I did so. I was a very little bride, slender and small. Amyas, who is big and broad, used to lift me up as if I were a child—and indeed does so still!

But in the twilight I looked almost ghostly, and somehow Betty's story had made me shiver. It touched me with the chill hand of fear. I was so happy—so far away from pain and tragedy! And yet, one day, perhaps, in an English garden this girl had been as happy as I—and recked as little of what life could bring.

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

In the hall I met our old cook, Betty's sister, and she held up her hands when she saw me.

"There, now!" she cried. "There now! And I am sure that was Betty's doing! To go and make you court ill-luck! Did no one ever tell you, child, how unlucky it is to try on a wedding dress?"

All her life Dinah had kept us in order. Even the Squire. I quite blanched and wilted before her.

"Betty could not see me in church," I said. "And I know I shall only be just dressed in time to-morrow—for I mean to go for a last ride—so I ran down to let her see!"

"And if ill-luck comes, as it will, it will be on her head!" Dinah cried wrathfully. "If I wasn't so busy with my jellies and creams for the wedding breakfast, I'd go and give her a good piece of my mind!" (Dinah had given away so many "pieces of her mind" in her day that I always wondered she had so much of that commodity still on hand.) "But there! go and take it off, child, and I'll carry in tea. The Rector said he'd be in about four. And I've been hearing the bell-ringers practising, and Thomas was down about the decorations! He'd forgot half the Squire told him! He's all agog about an idea of his own! You are to walk through an arch to the church with 'Daphne Adair' in white roses, and come back through one with 'Daphne Carew'! He's as pleased as a child with a new toy, is old Thomas! Now go away and get it off. Oh, Miss Daphne! how could you be so foolish?"

She was relenting already of her scolding, dear old Dinah! I ran away laughing, and took off the veil and dress. But somehow I did not quite like Dinah's wrathful prognostications and alarm. They haunted me, and gave me an odd feeling—or was it Betty's story of the Mutiny, and Amyas' grandmother?—and I did not cheer up till I looked and saw above my little bed the text which Betty herself had given me to put there: "*There shall no evil come nigh thy dwelling.*" and "*Quiet from fear of evil.*" Little birds and autumn leaves surrounded the letters of gold. I lost the odd, intangible chill. How foolish I was! What evil could be near me? Here in this sunny and safe corner of our

dear homeland! It was England, not India!

I was ready for Amyas, in my old white book-muslin dress, and he came in about four. But to my surprise he seemed slightly put out. And after kissing me he told me he had to go to town that night, and would not be back till ten o'clock next morning.

"I had a mysterious letter," he said, "from a solicitor who used to do business for my father, bidding me come up at once and lose no time. He is leaving for Paris on important business to-morrow, and must see me before he goes. He would explain on arriving. Of course I shall go. He said he would meet me at the station, and we could dine together. I shall take the early express, darling, to-morrow, and be back by ten. As the wedding is not till two, I shall have heaps of time. But Aunt Louise has dared me to call at the Hall, or see you till we meet in church. I shall send you down the flowers by eleven, and after all I shall be able to choose something in London for you to wear! I wish, little love, it was more worthy of my bride! I do not often sigh for money, save for your sake, and for the poor cottars on the Ardiscrete estate. If I were rich, I would rebuild those cottages myself—they are the nests of typhoid. But a country rector's income—"

He sighed and smiled. Then I nestled up to him, and we talked of other things. He said he was the richest man in all England. I said I was the richest girl. He told me about Thomas's decorations, and the tea there was to be for the school children in the park.

The Squire came in and stood on the hearthrug in his dusty leggings, for he had been riding far, and he tried to speak happily, too, though he was sad. I knew that, and I went up and slipped my hand under his arm.

"Daddy," I said, "the Rectory is only five minutes' distance through the fields! Just five minutes. And the fields make a lovely walk. Clover and seeded grass and daisies all the way. And every single day of my life we shall meet. Every single day. Shan't we, Amyas?"

"Please God!" he said, and smiled on us both. "Please God!"

He came up then and stood beside me,

THE QUIVER

and, putting his hand on my arm, looked at the Squire. Amyas has beautiful dark eyes.

"I shall not take her from you, sir," he said. "You know, 'A daughter is a daughter all the days of her life.' So says the adage. She is yours still, only with my love and care to boot. A woman's heart is big enough for us both."

"Thank you, Amyas," my dear father said. They gripped hands then, and the clock struck, and Amyas said he had just time to get to the station.

I ran to the door with him. If I had thought, I would have had Firefly saddled, and ridden down with him. Firefly, my horse, and Ladybird, the Squire's, were the last of our once big stud of thirty.

I did not think much about the London visit.

"I am going to have a ride—a farewell ride on Firefly to-morrow, Amyas," I told him. "In the early morning as usual. Mrs. Freshman says she has never heard of a bride riding on the morning of her wedding day. But it will be lovely. Just Firefly and I, in the beautiful, early morning, before the world is awake!"

Amyas, a great horse lover himself, had vaulted on to his roan. He stooped down and kissed me again. He put his hand over mine.

"Sweetheart, don't vanish, as Kilmeny vanished—to the fairies for twenty years. Do you know Hogg's 'Kilmeny'? I shall read it to you in the winter dusk, while we sit cosy in the study. Don't vanish to the fairies. You are like one of them, little child-wife."

Ah! it comes back to me again, his voice as he spoke. I thrilled through and through. We forgot the train, and his mysterious summons—we forgot everything. We two were alone in the world, as Adam and Eve were alone in Eden; only we had no serpent, and the footsteps of God seemed near, in the dusk of the garden, for surely the God of Love is near when love is all around.

I felt so safe and sheltered. With joy beyond all words—happier than the tongue of woman can tell.

And then Dinah—essence of the practical—came out and asked Amyas if he knew it had "gone five," and Amyas laughed

and teased her, and asked if she would wear that cap in church. For though he was the Rector, and beloved of all the parish, and a scholar and a student to boot, he could be like a boy, too, now and then.

"I shall be dressed as befits my station, sir," Dinah said, "which is more than I can say of some girls in this village. That girl of Tom Tripp's the butcher, now. Tom Tripp's girl. In blue velveteen, with lace Miss Daphne might wear. If you could preach, sir, some Sunday, on the vanities of women and the foolishness of gew-gaws—"

"I must think of it, Dinah," Amyas said. He took up his reins, and then his dancing eyes came back to me. "But meantime look after Miss Daphne. And see she does not lose herself to-morrow morning. Or get spirited away by the fairies!"

He waved his cap, with a last long look, and I watched him canter down the avenue. Do you think there are many finer sights than a handsome man on a good horse? I did not, and Dinah did not. We both stood and watched. Nowadays—who watches the flight of a motor car? And then, when I looked round at last, Dinah was there waiting, and I knew that she wanted something.

"Miss Daphne," she said, "it's the wedding breakfast table. If you are to ride in the morning, as I heard you say, I'm afraid it won't be ready. For Nellie has sprained her silly foot—and with his lordship coming to propose the bride's health, and all—"

"I know, Dinah. I will come."

So I spent a happy hour setting the table, and rubbing up silver and glass, and putting all the flower glasses ready for their burden of white roses next day. The Squire looked in, to see that all was in order, and to offer to lend a hand. Long ago the butler and all his satellites had gone, and all the ten servants Betty had once ruled over so happily. Only Dinah and Nelly were the handmaidens left in the Hall. But we made the old polished mahogany table look charming, for the crystal was old and beautiful, and so was the silver, and no one but Dinah and I ever washed the wonderful old china; and to-morrow, when Dinah's jellies, and trifle, and clotted cream, and strawberries, and raspberries, and cakes

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

light as feather-down were on the table, I knew all the guests, and even his lordship—the kind Earl of Betterstone, my god-father—would be quite pleased. He liked simplicity and no parade; we made none, and the Squire had utterly refused Aunt Sarah's offer of her footmen and a lunch from town. I was marrying a country clergyman, he said, and one who was too perfect a gentleman and too good a man to wish a false show of wealth. All those who wanted the town lunch, and funkeys and powder-polled footmen behind their chairs, could stay away!

The room was all ready—people gave wedding "breakfasts" in those days—and I ran out to the garden once more, to see if I had left my Leghorn in the rose pergola.

The garden was full of twilight ghosts. They crept up beside the sundial. Flowers always chat together then. The sunflower unbends and the hollyhock descends, the pansies whisper and the sweet peas gossip, while the "Painted Lady" tosses her head above them, and the roses nod pink and white heads drowsily. There was my hat under the white brier rose bush. I stood and looked up into the starlit sky. The great dark blue vault of heaven was there, and the stars were the golden nails that kept down the filmy carpet which hid that bright and glad world from ours. Still some of the strange, childlike belief rested with me. We did not hear so much of Higher Thought and New Theology in those days. The Squire had taught me that God was near, and very kind, that not a sparrow fell without His knowledge. I do not know if New Theology and Higher Thought comfort one as these simple beliefs comforted me. The white roses nodded and whispered. I picked up one I had let fall, because I could not bear it to die on the path. I ran in, loth to leave the sweet night and the still sweeter garden. But there was the Squire to think of. He would be thinking—a little sad and lonesome—that to-morrow I should be gone.

"Come out, Daddy," I said, "and let us sit under the lime tree, and talk, and talk."

We sat down, and I nestled my hand under his arm. But we did not talk. We only sat there and loved each other.

CHAPTER II

THE WEDDING DAY

(*Told by the Bridegroom*)

I HAD not liked leaving the village the day before our wedding, though really, when I come to think of it, I was rather foolish. Betterstone was not very far from town, and it would be the easiest thing in the world to be back by 10 or 11 a.m. next day. In any case, Aunt Louise had said I was not to go near the Hall. Still, as I rode down the old avenue, leaving my little bride and Dinah looking after me, I certainly had the oddest presentiment of trouble. It vanished in the station, and I thought of other things. I was going to choose a little pearl locket for Daphne to wear to-morrow. I could not spend much, but the little girl had few jewels. I could not help thinking of my grandmother then. I had heard from old Mr. Felton (the solicitor I was going to see to-day) of her wonderful jewels. She had put them on, in a belt, I heard, before flying from the Delhi house on that dreadful night. Mr. Felton told me they had hoped to trace her by the jewels, or to gain some clue as to her fate. But none came. She had vanished in that sea of blood, utterly and completely.

I met Felton at Waterloo, and he took me in his private carriage to his solemn house in Bloomsbury. People did not dine so elaborately in those days, and never at smart restaurants, so we dined alone, and early, waited on by his dignified butler. Here there was no echo of the surge of London life. But Mr. Felton took his time to tell me why he had sent for me, and we were sitting over the dessert when he spoke, pushing a silver dish of peaches towards me. He had rather an odd, dreamy manner.

"Mr. Carew, do you ever think of your grandmother?"

I rather stared at that, and he continued, gazing before him, not at me, but vaguely, with a kind of latent terror in his eyes, as if down a dark and fearsome well.

"I have never—all my life—forgotten her," he said. "I knew her in her radiant girlhood before her marriage. To know a woman like that is a humbling process, my boy; it sends a man to his knees. She married very young—a mere child. The old ballad, 'She wore a wreath of roses,'

THE QUIVER

always makes me think of her. An exquisite creature! Rare! Exquisite! Her fate, as you know, was always an enigma, a tragedy. Sometimes I felt as if her people dared not—seek for her. Well, you will wonder what this preamble means—"He seemed to draw himself back with a start to modern life. "I wanted to bring her to your recollection because to-day—at last—I have in my hands a clue—a clue to her fate."

"A clue!" I uttered. "But she is not alive?"

"I do not know."

He got up and went to a drawer, and took something out. A piece of chamois leather, in which was a little string of pearls. At one end was a gold clasp richly chased and studded with rubies. The rubies formed the initial "F." Her name, I knew was "Florine." He laid it in my hand carefully.

"This pearl necklace was hers. We knew what she carried with her to that dreadful cellar. I found it yesterday in a pawnbroker's, a Jew's; I recognised it at once. I have searched for twenty years for trace of her things, because I had a vague theory about her. Now I am making fresh inquiry. I think she may be in England. I think someone is selling the jewels for her. They have been doing so for years."

"But—good heavens!" I cried. "If she were alive, she would have come—declared herself—"

He sat, again with that white, vacant look. I was to learn later that he had loved my grandmother unavailingly.

"God knows," he said at last; "I do not. She may be dead—they may have taken everything from her body. But I am trying to trace the thread. And, as I had to go to Paris, I had a fancy to tell you, and to give you this—before your wedding day. I would not trust it to the post. Your bride, Miss Daphne Adair, might care to wear it. I think she, Florine Lovelace, wore it on her wedding day."

He put the necklace in my hand, and we sat on talking, but not again of the past. I left very early, and posted the necklace to Daphne. She would get it by the last post that night, about ten o'clock. I wondered at the beauty of the workmanship, the value of the rubies. I knew Daphne

would love to have it, but somehow the whole affair had saddened me, and the story haunted me. There was something horrible and sinister about it all. I could not but think of Felton's grey, elderly face, the eyes that seemed to look back into an old terror. I thought of Cawnpore, of the murdered women's hair, which the British soldiers took and divided, swearing to kill a sepoy for every hair. No, it was not the train of thought for my wedding day. Then I plunged into some necessary parish business.

I was glad to leap into a hansom next day and catch my train at Waterloo. Never had that dingy station seemed more desirable. And my heart began to leap and sing as we dashed away from the dirty brick and mortar into the open country. England was a bower of roses, or so it seemed to me; white roses, in which Daphne's face floated, her bridal veil misty and inchoate. Oh! the chalice of love and life was at my lips that day, and I was like a man intoxicated with joy, drunk with happy hope. Mine had been a lonely boyhood and manhood; I would never know loneliness any more.

I got to Betterstone about twelve, and there was my horse, held by the old gardener. I rode home, and was in the study till one. Then I lunched hastily, and dressed. The church was close to the Rectory, a little Norman edifice embowered in roses, by which the dead lay. Sheep grazed among the long grass, and rested by the high mounds; the sunshine dazzled on the old grey stone, and picked out the mossy lettering; there were white pinks and dog-roses opening everywhere, and pansies and stars of Bethlehem. Our God's acre was like a garden.

I could see the people gathering—all the old and young of the parish. They so loved Daphne. I made my way to the vestry, and there I met my old friend Harry Bellairs, who had driven up from the station straight to the church. He was in the highest spirits; he kept on reporting to me from the vestry window all those who were coming. Old Lady Plumfield, in a feathered hat, and with a bouquet of red geraniums. The doctor and his wife, the school teachers—a crowd of children with rose leaves—all the village tradespeople—and here was Lord Betterstone, and my lady in grass-green brocade and diamonds—"What does that

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

woman always wear green?" Harry cried—and the organist had come. Ah! it was Handel's matchless "Largo." But could he not have chosen something rather more exhilarating?

I scarcely heard all this scattered chaff of talk. I was looking over the trees, and thinking of Daphne. Daphne, all in bridal white—her sweet child face under the floating veil. Ah! a man should tremble, surely, to take that small hand in his—to think of her purity, her innocence, her trust. It took me to my knees that thought. "To know a woman like that is a humbling process, my boy. It sends a man to his knees." What had old Felton said? Still, great love casteth out fear—even the fear of un-worthiness.

And just at that moment the vestry door opened, and I could see the Squire's face. The Squire's face? Was it the Squire?

All the ruddy colour had gone—all the brightness. He looked twenty years older. The skin hung loosely on his face; you could see the network of lines. He came up and stood before me. He moistened his lips. Then I spoke harshly.

"Where is Daphne?"

"She—she—is not here!"

"Not here?" I cried as I gripped his arm. "Not dead!"

"Speak, Squire, speak!" Bellairs urged him; for the old man was gazing vacantly before him, as if only half awake, and for me the world was reeling. "Tell him—the truth."

"No!" he cried fiercely and suddenly; then, "No, of course—of course—not dead. How could that be? On her wedding day? And in—England where melodramatic, outrageous things—like that—don't happen. But she went out to ride—alone—Firefly. Very early. A long ride.



"Not here?" I cried as I gripped his arm. "Not dead!"

she told Dinah. And she did not come back—it was time to dress, and we got anxious—and I started out—and at the avenue gate I met Firefly—by herself—riderless. She came up, and stood trembling by me, like a human being. You know, a horse is next door to human. But no Daphne! No Daphne! And we have searched—and searched—and we cannot find her."

I think I laughed out at that, suddenly and wildly. It was all so wildly, tragically impossible.

I had told Daphne not to disappear—as Kilmenny had disappeared for twenty years—to the fairies.

I took my hat, and turned to the two

THE QUIVER

men. The Squire's look told me I must be quite calm and cool.

"I am going to find her," I said. "Harry, you are to go with the Squire. See he is not too much alarmed. I shall find Daphne. In the meantime will you ask the people to go away?"

"All right, old fellow."

Bellairs gave me back a quiet look. He took hold of the Squire's arm. I could hear from the church the rustle and murmur and whispering suddenly cease; the "Largo" abruptly died away. Something—a breath of cold air—seemed to sweep over the church, down the chancel, over the pews.

I opened the vestry door and went out.

But all the sunlight seemed to strike me as if with a sword; the white carnations on the graves overpowered me—it seemed as if the roses scattered leaves, as if they were tears, as I passed.

Where was Daphne? Where?

The horse—riderless! And then I heard the Squire's piteous voice:

"These things don't happen—in England. They don't happen."

I could think of him—only of the Squire's anguish—that was the curious part of it. I alone, on my eyrie of pain and anguish, could look down and think of him. For great fear and anguish are solitude—they make a Pisgah height. There would be time enough to think of myself—by-and-by.

* * * * *

I was sitting in the study late that night. Nothing had been found—no trace of my little bride at all. We had scoured the country road, and there were men scouring it still. In jumping over a ditch I had sprained my ankle, and I could therefore do no more that night. I only hindered the others; so I got home. Somehow, I had to sit there, waiting. Harry Bellairs was with the Squire, who had fallen into a heavy doze. Next day was Sunday, and I had to take the service. At the last moment the curate in the next parish had wired me that he could not come. I did not believe my darling was dead. I would not. I knew all the others believed it, believed they would find her dead body, and carry it back to the Squire; but I did not. Somehow her spirit would have come to me and told me. I felt sure of that. In danger, perhaps—but not gone.

That filmy curtain (how thin it seems sometimes to us, when our eyes are bright with hope and faith) had not fallen between us yet.

And, following an odd fancy, I had taken down the Ettrick Shepherd's poems because I could not sleep, and because I had given Daphne a copy, with a sketch I myself had made of her face as Kilmenny.

I had said to her, too, only yesterday—was it possible it was only yesterday?—that she was not to disappear like Kilmenny.

I read the scattered lines, and they seemed to repeat and echo through my dusty, book-lined room:

"Bonnie Kilmenny gaed up the glen,
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress flower round the spring,
The scarlet hypp and the hind berrye . . .
For Kilmenny was pure as pure could be;
But lang may her lover look o'er the wa';
And lang may he seek i' the greenwood shaw;
And lang, lang greet ere Kilmenny come hame."

In time of stress we snatch at straws, we take a foolish, eager delight in utterly irrational things.

"She *did* come home," I said to myself. "In the end she *did* come home. But where are you, Daphne?"

One o'clock struck from the quiet church tower then, and I went and stood at the window. Nothing answered me. I could hear the trees sighing around the churchyard; that was all. The dead were near; the quiet dead in their "resting graves." That was a fine phrase of the old Scottish Covenanters, and vaguely comforting. Only a rest.

"Daphne!" my spirit cried again, as if calling to her. "Daphne!"

And just then I heard a footstep, and could see Harry Bellairs come through the yew hedge opening, the hedge which divides the Rectory from the Hall grounds. I limped painfully to the hall door, and opened it. He laid his hand kindly on my shoulder, with an Englishman's speechless but oddly comforting way.

"No—no news," he said. "They have all come back—all except old Thomas. You see, she may have ridden far, and the moor is wild over at Trescoe. They asked at the houses all the way, but no one had seen or heard anything. They went up to the Grange, the queer old house near the

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

disused quarries, and asked. Nothing there, either. Besley said a lame servant came—they are new people—the owner is ill—but he knew nothing, had seen nothing. We searched the quarries. She was not there."

He came in and sank down tiredly. I went and got him something to eat. Dinah and Betty were both ill with anxiety. And I aw him out, later, and across the paddock, standing by the open Rectory door after. Still, I could not sleep. Still, Daphne, vanishing "up the glen," as Kilmeny had vanished, tortured me, evaded me.

It was madness. I felt, to try to sleep. Upstairs horror would seize me, and fear. I would see her lying somewhere under a hedge, in a ditch of last year's beech leaves, her fair hair against the dead moist leaves and moss—her sweet, fair face kissed by the night wind—those lovely, velvety dark eyes half closed. Daphne was very fair, and her hair curled softly like a child's, and yet her eyes were softly, languorously dark, and a man's soul melted as he looked—melted away from him. And her little hands—

No. "That way madness lies."

"These things must not be thought of in such wise,
So they would make us mad!"

Lady Macbeth was right. Sometimes we must not think. So I took up "Kilmeny" again, and read the last lines :

"It wasna her hame, and she could not remain,
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And returned to the land of thought again."

Ah! but to my Daphne it was no "world of sorrow and pain."

As I thought, a ray of light suddenly flashed into the room. Dawn, creeping up in such soft grey sandals that I had not heard, had changed the earth. There was a little rustle and a chirp of drowsy birds. I could smell the clover and the meadow-sweet from the paddock. The shaft of light brightened and broadened till it rested upon my portrait of Daphne on the table. The pictured eyes seemed to smile. I sat down and, lifting it, pressed my kisses on it. I let my weary head fall forward on the table. I could pray.

God would give her back to me! When I looked up, the room was full of pale, golden sunshine, the light of a new day.

But it was a day that brought me no news—no hope.

CHAPTER III

AFTER THE WEDDING DAY

(*Told by the Bridegroom*)

THE days had gone on. They had merged into a week—the longest week of my life. Nothing had been heard of Daphne—nothing at all. We had scoured the country roads, and there was no trace of her. The wildest rumours were afloat. Someone told me the suggestion was that she had repented of her promise at the last, and gone off to London! Girls are liable, they said, to sudden changes of mood. Others whispered that her dead body would be found in some remote ditch, some hidden hole—that Firefly had thrown her. Few, very few, believed she was alive.

But I believed it. Somehow her spirit would have come back to me and told me. I told the Squire that, when he was well enough to see me. Somehow I should have felt that she was beyond the veil.

The Squire was very ill. All one night he had wandered over the moor, drenched to the skin, and now he was in bed with a severe rheumatic attack—chained to the Hall, unable to leave his room. It was a sad house, a sad village; a deep shadow hung over the house and over the village. I do not think anyone except myself hoped. But I clung to it as a drowning man clutches at straw. I do not say but that the week was hard to live through, and was beset on either side by the dark waters of terror and despair. We had sent, of course, for a detective from town, and great things were expected from him; but he was not a Sherlock Holmes, and very soon he departed for London. He said we must try to track her there. Since her body was not, apparently, anywhere, she must have come to the great whirlpool, sucked in by one of its myriad currents. Sooner or later, he said, all mysteries were solved there. All threads ended there. In London was the clue to her disappearance. I let him go. I was sure my darling was not in London.

It was on the evening of the eighth day that Mr. Felton arrived. He had been in Paris, and only just heard the story. To my surprise, he telegraphed that he would be down that evening, and I went to meet him at the station. As we walked up to the Rectory along the sweet country road, he looked to me more grey and ashen and

THE QUIVER

parchment-like than ever. It was odd to have him here. One could not, somehow, disassociate him from bulky tomes and black tin boxes, and a stiff roll-top desk, and an immaculate clerk—from rule and rote—from the gloomy dining-room in Bloomsbury, with the polished mahogany table and the old cut-glass decanters which he passed with such solemn precision round one way—the way of the sun. And yet he was a man with a soul, a man who had suffered, a man whom the breath of tragic memory could touch still with a chill air under which he shivered. He looked round at the green trees and the murmuring river, with a curious breath, as if he were being awakened from a dream. Later, after dinner, in the Rectory garden, he stood under the pergola, and a spray of pink Dorothy Perkins roses brushed his sallow cheek, and he looked up at the tiny pink heads with a sharp breath. Evening in the Rectory garden was very still. There was no sound save the distant raucous cry of Daphne's peacocks in the Hall garden—and that had something remote and appropriate in it, harsh though it was.

"I began to forget any place could be quiet, really quiet," the lawyer said at last, half vacantly. "Even in Bloomsbury the echo of the surges comes, the long echo! But here, Carew—a man could sleep well here. The dead could sleep well. They would not dream. Do you sleep well?"

"Not just now," I said briefly. "I seem to lie and wait for my little girl's footsteps. She will come back, Felton."

He looked at me sharply. A gleam came into his eyes.

"Ah, yes—yes! She will come back. I do not for a moment think—feel that she is dead. There is a great deal in instinct, and I am glad to see you can hope. The poor old Squire, I hear, cannot. Well, I hope Miss Daphne will turn up soon. For the old, without hope"—he shrugged his shoulders—"the spring of life is gone, the desire to live! '*They take my life when they do take that by which I live.*' I think it was Shylock who said so. Well, I don't wonder you keep young here. I think I had forgotten what quiet was. It seems to—to lay a gentle hand on a man's heart—almost like a mother's hand. It would be easy to hope—easy to forget!"

All this time I was looking at Mr. Felton,

I fear, with a strange feeling of irritation and restless impatience. All my mind and soul revolved round Daphne and the mystery of her disappearance. And here was a man who, in a way, seemed almost to acquiesce in it quietly; who said calmly she would return, and seemed to think no more of it.

"Mr. Felton," I began abruptly, as if I would rouse him from a reverie, "I have a sick woman to see before nine. May I leave you here? But, first, I wanted to ask—I hoped you had come down to offer some theory about Daphne? You—you have no theory?"

He seemed to waken at that from a dream, and he looked at me almost apologetically. "None at all," he said; "my poor fellow, none at all. I have no idea where she is. I came down here for something quite different. I put off telling you till after dinner. I saw you were absorbed in giving me all details about the day Miss Daphne disappeared. I came down to tell you about your grandmother."

I fear I gave rather a weary sigh. Sometimes it was a little hard to hope. I could not unclasp my mind from its hold on one subject.

"Have you found any more of the jewellery?" I asked. It did not seem to matter. Daphne had not worn the pearl necklace. All the world was empty—for I did not know where Daphne was. And the story of my grandmother's disappearance was an old one.

"Yes; more jewellery, and a clue," he said eagerly. "A clue! It is too long a story to go into now, but I can tell you this. She escaped from the palace into which D'Eyneourt saw her taken—he was the officer on picket duty outside Delhi whom she met. She escaped in the disguise of an Afghan boy. I have discovered that. A friendly ayah was with her. I have come across traces of her. A lady answering the description travelled with two native servants in France. She would be only about sixty-four or five now. She may be alive. She may have hidden from us all. Heaven knows why. There were the jewels. She may have lived on the sale of the jewels."

I fear I listened to all this with but half a heart. My grandmother seemed far off. Delhi, Cawnpore, seemed far off, lost in the grey mists of the past. The horror was

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

gone, almost the tragedy. The dead sleep well, and the great wheels of life move on and on—resistlessly. What was poignant was the ever-present ache and sting and anguish of patience—the want and hunger for my little girl !

"But if she wishes to hide," I said, "though I cannot think why she should, she will go on hiding. Have you any idea where she is ? "

"That is just it !" he cried, eagerly. "That is what I am trying to find out. She may be in these natives' power ! We do not know of what they are capable. There is something in it dark and sinister. I have put detectives on the matter, Mr. Carew. In dreams—in my dreams I often see her. She—I never forgot her. All my life she haunted me." He spoke in an odd, tremulously eager voice. "The tragedy of it ! In some curious way my life seemed entangled with hers, and I could not forget her. I have seen her, in my dreams, white-haired, sorrowful, with horror in her wonderful eyes, but never dead, never dead ! "

Almost he took me out of myself.

Mr. Felton must be over sixty. He had seemed to me nothing but a good, elderly man, who had outlived life and life's volcanic emotions, long ago—who had never drunk of life's elixir. And yet there was something in his voice that thrilled me. There was a stirring of dry bones. He looked over the garden and drew a long breath.

"This place brings back my youth to me," he said. "Her people used to ask me down to their country place. I made the wedding settlements. There were pink roses, just like those. Youth comes back. There is a tremendous power of latent youth in man, and if he doesn't have his meed of joy the hunger for it never dies. You remember what Gladstone said—at over eighty ? 'The sky lifts above me, the horizon widens ! ' To-night—God knows why—'the sky lifts above me.' "

He took off his hat, and let the breeze play about his head. I heard the clock strike nine, and knew I must go. Wondering, I left him, and he called after me he would come to meet me down the country road. He liked walking.

In the country road it was dark, but I knew my way very well. I do not think I thought much of the story he had just told

me. It seemed, in a way, unreal, impossible. How could he be sure that the lady with the two native servants was my grandmother ? He had advanced no proof. Many Anglo-Indians kept native servants here.

And then I thought of Daphne again. I looked into every glade ; I went off the road and called her name again and again. They were still searching, I knew, on the moor. The Squire held to it that she had gone as far as the moor, and that somewhere there was her dead body.

I shuddered as I thought, and it was very hard to rise above the blackness, the terror.

No, no, not that ! "That way madness lies."

* * * * *

I paid my call and turned homeward. It was later than I had intended to stay, but I had waited at the sick woman's earnest entreaty, and I think I had almost forgotten Felton. I started a little, half-way home, when his figure loomed through the soft purple darkness of the road, and he caught hold of my arm.

"Carew," he said, pantingly, in my ear, "are you afraid of 'the terror by night' ? Before God I never knew it before ! But it has been walking by me—walking by me all the way ! I heard it rustle in those leaves—my nerves are all wrong—and *I saw her face, Carew, I saw her face !*"

"Saw her face ? " I cried aloud, gladly. "Daphne's ? Daphne's ? "

"No, no ! Poor fellow ! "

He seemed to recall himself at that, and I saw him pass a handkerchief over his forehead. His eyes grew more natural. He stood still and seemed to recover his old manner. He even laughed nervously.

"I suppose it was thinking and brooding about her—and over the story. I don't believe in the supernatural—at least, I mean I never thought I did, in spite of Hamlet and his 'more things in heaven and earth.' My philosophy and my acquiescence in the Almighty's decrees were enough for me. My mind never went beyond the usual bonds and trammels, unless I thought of her—and the white walls of that Indian palace. But, Carew—I could have sworn *I saw her face !* There—looking at me out of those trees ! "

"Whose face ? " I repeated stupidly. "Whose face ? "

"Hers—Florine Lovelace's—Florine

THE QUIVER

Carew's, your grandmother's," he said. His voice echoed my impatience. "The same eyes! You never saw her eyes—'darker than darkest pansies.' She had white hair—I think it was white—in a kind of loose aureole. I cried out, and took a step towards her, and she vanished. I had heard a step on one side of the wood, Carew, going by me, in the leaves, all the way! Did you ever hear it? A creeping, stealthy step—all the way! Or is that—is that 'the terror by night,' and have I been working too long—without a holiday?"

"I fear it is that, Mr. Felton," I answered. I looked into the darkness on either side of us. "The ground there is strewn with last year's beech leaves. Sometimes a little breeze rustles them: I know the sound. It is like a footstep following one. The country people know it. And I dare say—you are so used to the roar and the rush of London and Paris streets—that the very hush here is ghostlike and shouts at you!"

"I dare say that is it," he said, but still in the same tone of reluctant admission. "I dare say that is it! All the week I have been thinking of her, and this place is like her old home, Lovelace Court. It can't be more than forty miles off. I—I suppose I get fanciful. We don't associate men of my profession with fancy, do we? And superstition?"

"Not usually, Mr. Felton."

I tried to rally him a little, for something in his grey face almost alarmed me. A man who sees apparitions, and hears footsteps, and owns to overwork! He had told me once that work was his wife and his child—his one aim and thought.

I got him back into the Rectory, and made him some coffee. I urged him to go early to bed. I always longed for the new day, for the post. It was, "Would God it were morning!" and "Would God it were night!" until I could hear some tidings.

And then I slipped through the garden to pay my usual last call at the Hall, to hear of the old man, and if there was any news. Mr. Felton had taken his candle and gone upstairs. He had resumed his old manner, like a cloak.

Dinah met me in the hall, and shook her grey head.

"No, no news, sir," she said, answering the unspoken question of my eyes. "No

news. The search party to-day found nothing. And the master is no better. Dr. Gray sent a nurse. She can't get him to eat! He lies and listens. I need not ask if you have news, sir? We heard a strange gentleman had come to the Rectory. Maggie was over for a bottle of salad oil—hers hadn't come—and we couldn't help hoping—"

"Mr. Felton came on other business," I said.

I followed Dinah up the shallow oak steps, where Daphne's ancestors looked down on me, and in one—Lady Griselda's eyes—I felt I could almost read pity.

The Squire held out piteous, trembling hands in the big, lamp-lit room.

"My boy," he said, "pray the good God to let me go and find her on the other side. Soon! Soon!"

"You are going to find her here, sir," I said. It was wonderful how hope raised its head every now and then, and I spoke with odd conviction.

A flicker of hope dawned in the Squire's faded eyes. His nice white-capped nurse nodded.

"That is what I keep telling him, Mr. Carew," she said. "That it never does to give up hope in this world. Never. Half of the sorrows that kill people are the sorrows they never meet!"

I left him after a little. Dinah was waiting in the hall, and she surprised me at the door with a new pronouncement.

"I put it all down to Betty!" she said succinctly. "And so I told her. To the trying on of the wedding-dress! You knew she did, sir? I saw her with my own eyes! Tried it on, and the veil, and the posy, and all—gathered the posy herself—and ran in to see Betty! At Betty's age! To ask a bride to tempt Providence!"

"Dinah," I said, trying to smile, "do you know that is a heathenish expression that should be burned by the common hangman? Do you think God is a kind of gruesome heathen deity, who is 'tempted' to do dreadful things?"

She considered a moment. Some women are like children.

"I never thought of it like that, sir," she said: "but oh, where is my darling?"

"Wherever she is, she has not drifted beyond the kind eyes of God."

She nodded slowly, opening the door for me.

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

But, ah me ! ah me ! all the way home I was thinking of the picture she had conjured up. My little girl-bride in her snowy veil and white dress, with her posy of roses —my little girl !

from under my cap. We rode on and on and on. I let Firefly take her own way. She seemed to know as well as I the happy exhilaration in my veins, that it was my wedding day, and there never had been a lovelier morning.

When I drew rein at last, and began to take note of the time, we were on the Tresco Moor, near the old, disused quarry. I had often been near the place, but I had never been quite close. As a child, Betty, then my nurse, had always bidden the coachman drive on quickly. A lady, I heard her tell Peter, had been murdered there—a lady from the Grange, whose twisted chimneys could be seen not far off, down an old disused avenue. No one had lived at the Grange for years—they could not let it : it was too far from the station, too far from any village.

"The quarry is a lonesome, dreadful place !" I had heard Betty tell Peter, " and dangerous to boot. It's half full of green water, dreadfully deep and dangerous. Drive on, Peter. They say *she* haunts it ! "

And, oddly enough, all my life I had meant to come back and one day explore the old quarry. It had about it a fascination for childhood—the fascination of something eerie and unexplained. So I left Firefly on the road, patting her dear, velvety neck, and I got over the rough fence and walked up to the edge of the quarry. On the side opposite to me was a slight, rough path, leading down to the foot, where were still piles of granite, left, I suppose, at the last blasting.

In the very centre was a deep pool of blue-green water, covered with a horrid green crust of slime, and on the edge next to me was growing the loveliest bush of wild roses I have ever seen. It was literally covered with roses, and they were a deep, wonderful pink. I exclaimed as I looked, and, going up, I bent forward to gather a spray which was dancing in the light breeze. I shall never know what happened.

At the moment I was scarcely thinking what I did. I was wondering, in the dim second plane of my mind, why they had killed the lady from the Grange, and if these roses had been here then, and if—if I could carry them home and put them on the breakfast table, and if—

The next thing I knew was the earth slipping from beneath my feet, and I was catching at the rose sprays, which were eluding my

CHAPTER IV

THE WEDDING DAY

(*Told by the Bride*)

I ROSE very early on the wedding day. A hot sun was pouring into my room, and when I looked out at the garden it was all ashimmer and aglow, and vocal with the song of birds and the scent of a hundred flowers. A great bush of syringa under the window seemed to fill the air with wedding bells, or so it seemed to me. White roses were everywhere, and the pergola was a crimson and white pathway : it appeared to me a miracle that so many pink Dorothy Perkins roses could cluster on one branch.

And everything called to me to come out. The world would not be awake for a good two hours. I was wild for a last gallop on my dear Firefly. My last gallop as Daphne Adair !

I stood and smiled down at the garden for a little. Have you ever noticed how friendly the flowers become in the early morning or late at night ? How close you get to them ! Almost they let you hear their secrets, almost their sweet fragile faces seem to caress you.

I put on my habit and slipped downstairs. I was full of foolish fancies. My heart was singing aloud in happiness. I dropped a curtsey to poor, pale Lady Griselda on the staircase, and to the old Judge Adair, who had been painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence and looked as if he thought he deserved the honour. Out on the grassy lawn the dew was like a myriad diamonds. All the village had prophesied a fine day.

I ran round to the stable and saddled Firefly. I had done that for a long time. In a very little I was on her back, and we were racing down the country road, she as happy as I.

Ah ! I wonder if any motor-car, however luxurious, can ever come up to the glory of galloping through a country road on the back of the good horse who loves you and whom you love ? My hair streamed out

THE QUIVER



"I was slipping - falling - where ?"

frantic clutch and dancing far above my head. I was slipping - falling - where ?

Thought is swift, and terror is swift, but it ended in a moment. There was a crash, and I knew no more. The blue sky above dipped down, and then went out, swallowed up in the dark.

* * * * *

Where was I ?

I tried to raise my head, and could not. I could only lift my eyelids. I was in my bedroom—at home, of course. There was the wall-paper, little wreaths of pink roses, held up by laughing cupids, and on the frieze were the gondolas, the Venice scene.

But how was this ? These were not wreaths of roses ; these were not gondolas. The paper was old and dingy. What had happened ? I closed my eyes and tried to think. The bed ? White curtains which Dinah washed herself, tied back with white ribbons. Were they all right ?

No ; the curtains were heavy red brocade, and had great gold tassels, like the bed in Lady Betterstone's house. Was I at Lady Betterstone's ?

Had I been dreaming ?

Something about syringa everywhere, and roses crowding on every branch, and Dorothy Perkins sprays, and hollyhocks—and an arch—with two names. What was it about the arch with two names ? And those two names ? What were they ?

I was so wildly curious. I opened my lips at that, and spoke aloud.

"Please, what were the two names ?"

Someone moved and came forward, and I regarded the figure with the most intense curiosity. A dark woman in flowing white raiment and strange dark eyes—deep dark eyes. She came near and looked down at me.

"What does the mem sahib want ?"

"I am not—that," I said faintly. It was odd how far off my own voice sounded. "What are the two names ? On the arch, you know ? It—bothers me ! And why—why are there no garlands on the paper ? Where is the gondola frieze I chose myself ?"

She gazed at me without saying anything.

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

Presently another shadow stole across the great dim room, and again I had the impression of a ghostly figure all in white. Everything about this figure was white. Even her hair. Her face was of a strange dead white, out of which her great purple-pansy eyes shone like lamps. They were lovely eyes. I seemed to know them quite well—that was the odd thing—had seen them quite lately. Her hair was pure white. She came and stood by me and looked down on me, very gently and pitifully. She laid a soft hand on my forehead.

"Poor child! You are better?"

"Better? I had not been ill!"

"I want to know about the two names," I said querulously. "The two names on the arch! Do you know them? Someone is to go the one way, and come back the other. And two names! Why are there two names when I can't remember even one? And why should I have two names? I think it is I—who have to go through the arch."

I could see her shake her head at the ayah. I don't know how I knew she was an ayah, but I did.

"Poor little girl!" she said earnestly. "Poor little girl! But you will remember, if you keep quiet! There is nothing to do but keep quiet. You are quite safe here. Mania and I will care for you. It is all right now, and the Rebellion is over. Over and past. Everyone is killed—everyone that would harm you. The gates are open. We can come and go. But you must keep quite quiet. Only that will cure you. Sleep, and to try to forget."

Where was I?

In all the mists, descending and ascending over me, I at last grasped the fact that I was not in the Hall. Where was I?

"Hush!" she whispered. "Hush! you must never say where you were—you must forget—forget for ever! Drink of a Lethe stream! You are safe now, and they will never find you again. For the English are here, and you will be well by-and-by, and get away. But never tell, or ask questions. Keep quiet: do not speak."

It was all too much for me then, and I closed my eyes wearily. I think I decided it was a dream, and I fell asleep.

After that I think I must have had a relapse, for there seemed days when I re-

member nothing but waking every now and then, and seeing the white figures come and go. They were very good to me, and no one ever had softer hands than Mania of the dark face and the strange, inscrutable eyes. The "white lady," as I called her to myself, was gentle, too. She seemed there, at all hours of the day, but through the night I never saw her, except once, when she came in, and I could feel that her hair was wet, and her cheek cool, and she told me she had been walking, because the night was lovelier far than the day, and no one ever stared and whispered in the night.

Gradually, very gradually, things grew clear, and bit by bit, little by little, I could pick up the threads. I knew I had been ill, very ill, that even yet I dared not think or puzzle. I could scarcely lift my hand, and it need not have been so great an effort, for it was a very tiny hand. And then one day, waking in the sunshine, with the song of a bird, it seemed to me that I remembered everything! The wedding morning, and the roses drenched in dew, and the trees slipping past in my wild, delicious ride, and the quarry, and the pool with the crust of green slime, and the wild roses! How those roses had annoyed me in my dreams, dancing ever above my head. Always out of reach!

I tried to raise my hand and could not, but I was remembering. I had fallen over the quarry on my wedding morning. But why—why had my father and Amyas not come for me? Where were they?

There was no one in the room when I slowly picked up, thread by thread, this long-lost recollection. I looked round the strange, old-fashioned room, and tried not to let terror and sudden fear engulf me. For I was safe, and of course they would come, and find me, and Amyas would hold me close.

It was a strange room. A little log fire burned in the grate, and over the fireplace there was an old cracked painting which apparently represented a battlefield. There was a Rembrandt-like gloom, and a scattered *mélée* of horses' hoofs and warriors, and everything was blurred with dim battle-smoke. On the floor was a hideous grinning Indian idol, or was it Japanese? In its dreadful, staring eyes were rubies; it had a horrid, fishy mouth. On a table was a brass bowl, richly carved, of dahlias—

THE QUIVER

dahlias called "Night," they were so darkly, richly red-brown and velvety.

Dahlias? But it was—high June.

And then, as I gave a little cry, I could see the white lady glide in beside me, and she sat down and let her hands rest on mine.

"Little girl," she said, "you are better to-day? You are not trying to think, are you? Mania says you sleep better and eat better. I sent them away to-day for fruit and other things to tempt you. You are better?"

"Much better," I whispered. "But—has no one come or written? Has no one been here? To ask? Where am I?"

"Hush!" she said, and looked round the

room as if the walls had ears. "Hush! you are in Delhi!"

"Delhi?"

I gasped. I tried to raise myself, and could not. I stared at her in horror.

Was her mind going? *Or was mine?*

People did lose their memories, their minds. Delhi? Oh no, it was she—was she—

"I remember now," I resumed faintly, "I remember. I fell into the quarry. I was riding Firefly. I was trying to gather wild roses. As if I had not enough in the Hall garden!"

"The Hall garden?"

She repeated the words after me, then muttered dreamily:—

"Birds in the high Hall garden
They are crying and calling
Maud! Maud! Maud!
They are crying and calling!"

"It is a song, a new song. They used to sing it before—the Rebellion."

But I held on to my little golden thread of memory; weak, trembling. I would not let it go.

"And I fell down, down! And you must have found me there and carried me in, and saved and nursed me. I am very grateful, very. But you must send and tell the Squire and Amyas."

"Amyas?"

She raised her white head at that, and I could see she looked at me as if I had been a sobbing child. Her eyes were all soft, tender pity.

"Poor child! He could not come."

"Could not come? Amyas? Why not?"

"Ah, perhaps I had better tell her."

She leaned her white head on her hand and looked down at me. I could see the fine network of lines round her wonderful eyes—those strange,



"The ayah said something in an unknown language. I lay and trembled. The truth burst in upon me. I was in the power of a poor mad lady."

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

sad eyes—terrible eyes—for they always seemed to me to look down, down into unknown depths.

"Poor child!" she repeated. "Perhaps it is better to tell you. For me to tell you. Amyas could not send for you. He is dead."

"Dead?"

My voice only came in a whisper. I had no more strength. But my eyes held hers.

"Dead?"

"Hush!" she said. "It is not a word to say like that. Do not look so broken-hearted. He died like a man, like a hero. I saw him die. He fell back, pierced with a dozen bullets, and gave one little gasp. His hands caught mine, and he fell over me—his blood on my face and dress. It was red enough—before. After, in the dark, I could look and see how peaceful he was, as if asleep. I was so glad. I kissed him and kissed him. I was down in the cellar, with the dead all over me. His head lay in my lap. We had had nothing to eat for three days—none of us had—and all the ammunition was gone—and, of course, he had promised to kill me—if the soldiers did not come." She paused, and seemed to think. "But he died first, and could not. They were all dead. Oh, no, you must not say the word like that. But quite happily."

I lay and looked at her.

Yes, her mind was gone, quite gone.

"But—that was not my Amyas," I whispered. "Poor lady! That is an old, old story. One you have heard—and I have heard it before, too. I can't remember now where. But my Amyas is alive—a clergyman. And my father—we live at the Hall. Will you please send and tell them that I am here?"

She nodded her head a little. Just then the ayah came into the room with a cup, and the white lady took it and held it to my lips.

"Yes, yes," she said; "we will send. Take this."

I drank, and again I was so tired that I could not talk any more. She would send. Poor lady! What tragedy lay behind her story? Or was it all fancy? Where could I be? The Grange? But why had the Squire and Amyas not sent to the Grange? Every now and then, when I looked up, she was there, or the ayah, and at last I grew

drowsy. I suppose they thought I slept, for by-and-by I could hear a whisper.

"She better, mem sahib? She get well?"

"Oh, yes. Every day she is a little better. And I thought she was dead—quite dead, Mania. She lay like dead for thirty hours. I counted them by my watch. It was her head, you know."

"Yes, mem sahib. She strike her head. When she better we take her home?"

"She has no home, Mania."

"No home?"

"She thinks she has," the white lady whispered; "but her mind is all gone. She did not know that the sahib was dead. She expected him to come. Did Kasir say to the men what I told him that day? Did he put them off the scent?"

"Yes, mem sahib. But—they were sahibs—"

She gave a little impatient sound. "Yes, but that does not matter. She can never go back. Never! We will watch her, and keep her safe. Poor child! She is lovely. She has hair like spun gold. And how it curls round your fingers! She might have been my daughter, Mania, if I had had another child. Amyas! She spoke of Amyas. Oh, yes, she will get well. But we must watch her, and never let her go, and keep her here, safe—safe. Where no one whispers or stares and nods."

The ayah said something in an unknown language. I lay and trembled. The truth burst in upon me. I was in the power of a poor mad lady, and how was I going to let Amyas and the Squire know?

The Squire? He would be breaking his heart. And Amyas? I had been lost, on the wedding day! What had passed since then?

CHAPTER V

TRYING TO ESCAPE

I USED to lie and think what I could do. I could not write, of course, and I saw no one but the ayah and the white lady. At first thought was very difficult, and I was aware, dimly, of the danger of it; but as I grew stronger I tried again one day to tell my story to my strange benefactress, to entreat her to send to the Hall.

But it was all of no use. She used to

THE QUIVER

listen with an air of gentle sorrow and pity, every now and then shaking her head. After a little she would say, "Yes, yes," as one would to a child who did not understand.

Then I tried to tell the ayah. But I soon discovered that her English was very limited. She stared at me with perplexed eyes when I tried to tell her—make her understand. I had to give that up, too.

What puzzled me was, why they had not discovered me by now? Even if Firefly had gone home, as I thought she would, surely they could have traced me here? And then I remembered the case of the poor lady who had been lost in England for long months, for whom all the detectives had searched. Finally, her body had been found in a hidden copse—found by some children playing hide-and-seek. Did they think that of me? Ah, the poor Squire! The Squire and Amyas!

I was so weak still, and my head still so giddy, that I could not even walk to the window. A curious lethargy came over me after a little. I used to try and speak to them at the Hall—to send telepathic messages through the air! "I am safe. I am coming back." I would whisper in the dusk. I used to picture myself walking up the familiar avenue, going into the study, holding out my arms to my father. I felt as if Amyas would know, would feel I could not be dead!

Then, as I grew stronger, I made up my mind, of course, that at the earliest opportunity I would get away. They left me a good deal alone. The white lady would relapse into long, long reveries, even when she sat in my room. Once or twice I heard her singing to herself in the dusk. She painted, too, and embroidered. Her songs were English ballads fashionable about thirty or forty years ago. Sweet, quaint, sentimental ditties, that made me think of early Victorian and mid-Victorian days, of girls in the poke bonnets and sidecurls of the days of the young Queen: "Shells of ocean," "She wore a wreath of roses," "Kathleen Mavourneen," and "What would you do, love?"

She had a very sweet voice, clear and cultivated, but always there was something in it which broke one's heart. I could not have told you why. I never heard anyone play the "Lieder" as she did. They were songs without words, indeed.

Sometimes I was afraid she was ill. Once or twice I thought she was a victim to heart attacks, she was so breathless—and I could see the ayah looking at her anxiously. One day I asked her if she was in pain, and she nodded her head.

"It is my heart. I shall die suddenly one day. Death has tapped me on the shoulder. Just a little warning touch 'Be ready,' he seems to say. 'Be ready. It is not long now.'"

"Have you seen a doctor?" I asked her. She spoke so naturally often that I used to forget my poor white lady was not quite like others. "Did he tell you to do anything?"

She sat and looked at me. There were some late roses in her lap, and she was arranging and rearranging them idly.

"Yes, he gave me medicine. He told me—what I told you. But he said I might live for years. It is curious, is it not, how some people live on and on? Women are sometimes hard to kill—." She paused. "But it will come, some day, and the dark gates will open at last—at long, long last!"

I tried again that day to make her understand. But I gave it up.

"Poor child!" she said. "These are only fancies. I had them, too, often. I used to think that I was at home in the old garden, waiting for my lover. I forgot he was dead. They were all dead—piled up in that dreadful cellar. But we are quite safe now, both of us, and England has the key of the gate. India learned her lesson—that what England takes she keeps."

I meant to give myself a little more time. Then I would get up at night, and dress, and slip out. The white lady would be asleep, and all the great old house wrapped in silence. I would unlock the door and walk out—manage to get to the road. There the air would revive me, and I would go on till I came to a cottage. There was a cottage on the edge of Tresco Moor, and there I could send a message. But I had to give myself time; I had to practise walking a little. I could see I was the ghost of myself. A little shadowy ghost, with big eyes that burned deep from hollows, and with dark shadows underneath. Death had indeed touched me on the shoulder too, and then he had

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

gone away. Life and love held the citadel, by God's mercy.

* * * * *

At last I thought the time had come, and I made all my plans. The poor white lady had come in and kissed me, and then gone away. She looked fraiser and whiter than ever that night, in a loose white dress of Indian gauze, with a golden girdle round her waist, and a necklace of wonderful rubies on her neck. I managed to put on all my belongings. The little pearl necklace with the gold and ruby clasp, which Amyas had sent me the night before the wedding day, and which he had said belonged to his grandmother, I had worn under the jacket of my riding coat, and the ayah had never taken it off. My fingers trembled as I plaited my hair, but I was too weak to do it up, and I could only let it hang down my back. I fastened my shoes, and put on the serge habit—fortunately it was a summer one, and light. I waited till the house was quiet and midnight had struck, then I stole across the room and opened the door.

To my surprise I could see the ayah lying on a mat almost across my door, and I started back in fear. But she was so soundly asleep, wound in the old, thick rug, that I could step over her, and I crept down the corridor, my heart thudding in my ears, as if I were a culprit or a thief. I could even look around with awe at the strange old house, at the dim paintings on the wall, at the great empty hall, with its minstrels' gallery and big stained glass window. I paused a moment, and looked at it, the moonlight falling through and making strange patterns at my feet. The floor was

lozenged in black and white, and wide shallow oak steps wound up above me. Sometimes a shutter creaked and swung. I had heard that the Grange was falling to pieces, that many of the rooms were mere shel's, the flooring gone, and the windows rotting in their casements. No



"To my surprise I could see the ayah lying on a mat almost across my door, and I started back in fear."

one would take it, people said. It would cost a fortune to restore, and a retinue of maids to keep up. "No one but a madman!" Alas, my poor white lady!

But I was getting on better than I hoped, though my face was wet with the effort, and I still swayed a little to and fro. The fresh air would revive me—the thought that I was returning to the Squire and Amyas. I rested for a little in a chair drawn up by the big open fire, and I could

THE QUIVER

see that the logs had lately fallen together. It must be autumn ; and I had come here in high June !

There was a bowl of dahlias and everlasting sweet peas, and a late rose or two on the table ; there was an easel, and an unfinished sketch. Here the white lady often sat and worked. Did she sit in this high-backed oak chair ? I could see the piano too, and an old spinet in the corner, also a wonderful sewn screen, and the walls by the fireplace were hung with old tapestry. The minstrels' gallery badly wanted painting and restoring, but I looked up and pictured the musicians there, and later a band, for the county ball. It must have been seventy-five years since the Grange was occupied.

And then, feeling better, I rose and crept to the door. I had hard work undoing the heavy bolts and bars, but at last I finished, and pulled the heavy door open.

It was a lovely scene in the moonlight—the old house behind me, with its dim lattice windows ; many of them I could see were broken and shutterless. Now and then a shutter creaked with a ghostly, warning sound. Before me was a grassy sweep, covered with quaint devices cut out in yew, peacocks and cocks, and here and there a little pyramid or a dumpy spire. Beyond them was a high yew hedge, behind which, I found, was the garden. An old green gate led into it, and by its side was the white marble figure of a nymph, her head turned to one side, as if she were looking for someone. Seen in the moonlight, it was like the setting of an old picture. So far remote from our bustling century, our rush and stir and struggle, our cables and telegrams, that I had to unfasten my mind with a jerk, as it were, before I could realise the century in which I lived. But I closed the door very softly and crept round the quiet path.

As I did so, it seemed to me as if something stirred behind me, and my heart began to beat loud and fast. I looked up and around, but the windows only stared down at me blankly, the yew peacocks and cocks seemed to wait imperturbably. I had to pass through a paved courtyard to get to the back entrance, and I meant to go that way, for I had heard the Grange avenue was a mile and a half long, and I

knew it would be dark under the trees. When I came into the courtyard, creeping by the wall of the house, my heart leaped into my mouth. For there was a sudden wild bark, and a great dog in a kennel dashed out at me, and filled the air with his baying. Terrified and unstrung, at first I cowered back against the wall, and then, as I heard a sound within, I fled across the yard furthest from the dog, and ran on and on, whither I scarcely knew, panting and terrified.

It was too much. The earth began to reel around me. I could hear someone in pursuit, and my feeble strength gave way. I was no Atalanta in any case, and I was weaker than I knew.

I fell in a huddled heap, and the darkness once more engulfed me, even as I felt myself touched and lifted from the ground.

I was the white lady's prisoner once more

CHAPTER VI

THE PEARL NECKLACE

WHEN I came to myself I was in bed and the ayah was gently bathing my head. I could look up in her face and see its usual expression of settled melancholy, of mute patience. She said nothing. Presently she gave me something to drink and I fell asleep. I was too worn out to do anything else. But next morning, wakened by a dazzle of sunlight on my face, I felt it all rush over me, and I could plan once more and struggle against my bonds. I could not go on like this. I must escape ; must send Amyas a message. Food must come to the house—messengers must come. I must manage to send a letter. So hope flickered, and then burned steadily, and when the white lady came in I said nothing at all about the matter. I thought it better not. She, on her side, said nothing. A few days later the ayah carried me down to the hall in the evening, taking me up in her strong arms as if I were a child.

The fire was lit on the hearth, a fire of logs and coal, and the white lady had been seated, just as I had pictured her, in the high carved chair. The place was in the shadow save for a little disc of light from the lamp near the fire, and the ayah placed me on an old sofa covered with a richly

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

embroidered Indian shawl, and then left me. She had dressed me in one of her mistress's dresses—a dress of soft crépe, of a dull rose, and I had still my precious necklace under the soft lace.

Presently the white lady glided in, and she came up and kissed me tenderly and pitifully. She was more than usually silent, however, and once I could see her look at the door and then back at me, as if warningly. Then I saw that the heavy key was gone! I was going to be more carefully guarded. And that night her story was all of the Mutiny.

"It is not safe still to go out after dark," she said. "One never knows. Our servants are faithful, and would die for me—Mania's brother did die—but we do not know the rest. And we are only safe here."

I could only wait and say nothing. My chance must come. Every evening then, for a week, I was carried down, and I was getting stronger—fitter to think, and plan, and watch. I was able to write a note at last; it was addressed to Amyas, and told him where I was, and begged him to come for me at once—told him I was in the power of a poor insane lady. After long search I had found pencil and paper and envelope. This note I placed in another larger envelope, and in this I put the little loose silver I had in my habit pocket, begging whoever found it to take the letter to the Rector.

I had just finished doing this one afternoon when I heard a sound of voices below my windows, which faced the back of the house, and, creeping up, I peeped out. A tall native man-servant was saying something briefly to a lumbering youth in a labourer's smock. They stood a moment under my window; then the native said imperiously, 'Wait—I fetch her,' and disappeared.

Now was my time. I opened the window and called softly to the man.

"There is money in this. Take the letter to the Rector of Betterstone. Keep the money," I called. "Hide it now!"

I threw the letter. I had no time for more. The man lifted the letter, and he thrust it into his pocket. Oh! how I thanked God! He had a stupid, lowering face—I thought now that I recognised him as a half-witted man who did odd messages for the Trescoo butcher—but at least he had

put it into his pocket. There, even if he forgot, or did not understand, it might be found—it would be found. I was trembling with excitement. The very thought of freedom, of seeing Amyas, made me feel well and strong. But I could only realise how weak I was, when I crawled about the room presently, and Mania lifted me in her strong, sinewy arms and bore me downstairs as usual to the hall. But I felt as if I could wait now, and be more patient. I could even eat my supper with some appetite, the white lady and I sitting opposite each other at a little gate-legged table, and she talking in her odd, rambling, picturesque way about people and things I had never heard of.

But after we had finished, and the tray was taken away—we had always rice and curry, and fruit, and pudding, and the two Indian servants waited in solemn dignity—she said something which startled and surprised me.

I forgot now what she had been speaking about, for her talk was always the strangest tangle, and I used to let my thoughts wander, picking her up every now and then; but I was struck suddenly by the sound of a familiar name—"Felton."

"A little man," she said; "the family lawyer. He had always been the family lawyer. His father, I mean, and his grandfather. They all looked alike, I think. Do all lawyers look alike? He always spoke as if he were quoting the law. I used to think he looked as if he lived on parchment and red tape, and slept on great dusty tomes. Somewhere in Lincoln's Inn Fields. But he came down and brought the settlements. I remember showing him the garden; a beautiful garden. There was a rose pergola. He stood and looked at it—I can't think why I remember that—and there was a strange kind of hunger in his white young face. It looked young for a moment. He would never look very much older, that little lawyer. You know the kind of man I mean? They are born like that; they go through life exactly the same—never young, never old."

She paused dreamily. When she was like this I could not realise the "sweet bells jangled."

"What is life to them? So many dinners and breakfasts—all the same. So

THE QUIVER

many nights of sleep. Do they ever dream? Do they ever hope? What do they enjoy? Do they care for sunsets? Flowers? What is their goal? Are they half-alive, half-awake, and in heaven will they wake up?

She had odd, romantic, beautiful fancies now and then. I looked up at her.

"Do you know?" I said, "I have heard of a lawyer called Felton, too? He lives in Lincoln's Inn Fields."

"Ah! it would be a son, perhaps," she said in her low, quite reasonable way. "Or perhaps himself. One night I think I saw him here. I was out walking in the woods. I grow restless sometimes, and I go out. Of course it is not safe, but then I disguise myself in the old dress—the Afghan boy's—and no one troubles or molests me."

"About the lawyer," I said musingly, "I wonder if it could be the same? He is the family lawyer of someone I know."

"He is a good little man," she said indifferently. "Clever and shrewd. I don't know what made me think of him, standing there under the pergola, with that strange look—a look of suffering, and one never thinks of lawyers as capable of suffering, does one? Of burdens? Christ said they placed the burdens on other people's shoulders. 'Grieve not to be borne.'"

She got up and wandered about the room. What was her history? How often I had wondered!

Then she came back and leaned over me. She put her hand caressingly on my shoulder.

"You are lost in that rose crépe—you poor, pretty little girl. I suppose they all told you how pretty you are? But so wan and weak, after that night of terror. Though the terror has not scared you as it did me. Seared—and burned——"

Her hand, wandering over my face, suddenly dropped down and felt the necklace. She fingered it gently.

"Did they leave you that? I have sold nearly all mine. All except the rubies. I wore them round my waist in a belt, and they never found them. Round my waist——" She broke off suddenly and sharply, and bent down closer.

"Unfasten your necklace," she cried imperiously. "Let me see it."

I obeyed her, and I could see her dark eyes flash as I held it down to the lamp.

Then, to my amazement, she turned on me like an outraged queen.

"Where did you get my necklace?" she cried.

CHAPTER VII

(Told by the Bridegroom)

"The arms of my true love
Around me once again."

I HAD looked in the calendar, amazed, that day. It was October. Daphne had been lost almost three months! Lost, in this little corner of England!

The Squire was very ill. He took no notice of anything, had no interest in life. Only at post-time would he rouse up and crawl to the window, and stand looking down the drive. The doctor said it was killing him. The fever was gone, but he had no desire to live. "If they don't find her soon," the medical man said to me, "the old man will go. And how can one hope?"

And then he would remember to whom he spoke, and would try to cover up or explain away his words. I knew they all decided Daphne's little body lay in some hidden copse. I knew no one hoped—except myself.

That day Felton had come back. He was still full of tracing my grandmother, and now and then he would come to Betterstone to tell me his progress or non-progress. He was convinced she was in England—living perhaps in the power of some wicked people. He arrived unexpectedly about five that afternoon in a fly from the station.

"They tell me they are on the track," he said; "really on the track, now. Someone has sold rubies in London—a single ruby—a very fine stone—and it was said to have been a native. She had rubies. And if we trace her, Mr. Carew, by-and-by it will mean a good thing for you. The jewels were wonderful. Her husband was a Carew of Keppe Carew—the last of the old family. The jewels came into the family in the time of Charles II. It was said——"

But I did not listen to that. I was not even greatly taken up about the rubies. I thought it would all come to nothing. It seemed impossible my grandmother could be alive. There were many stories such

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING

as hers. Tragedies of the Mutiny of which one dared not think or speak.

I made him sit down and have some supper. We were in my dining-room, and I had been writing my sermon in the study: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." It was hard to hope in those days, but still I kept my little lamp aglow. I could not feel my darling was dead.

"It is an extraordinary thing," Mr. Felton said at supper, "how easily people can be lost. The world is small, and yet hideously large. And I think the British mind has not the acumen of the French. In France they have men who can see through a stone wall. If this had been in France, your story, my dear sir, and mine—"

He stopped then. My old servant Bridget was waiting in the doorway till he should have finished. I saw she had a note in her hand.

"I beg your pardon, sir. It's the butcher from over Trescoë way. He doesn't know if it's anything, but he thinks it's like your name. It's a note he found on his message boy—poor Sam Warren (he's not quite right, you know, sir), and Bell the butcher hopes it's nothing you should have got before—"

"Give me the note, Bridget," I said.

I think I spoke rather weakly. It was dark now, and I was very tired. I supposed it was a message. I was loth to go out again, for I heard the Squire was very low, and every moment I expected to be summoned to the Hall. I had heard Bell the butcher drive past a few moments since, and wondered at his late call.

I took the envelope and held it down to the lamp, Felton going on with his supper.

"It does seem like my name," I said. The note was wet and dirty. A corner of the envelope was torn, and the writing was in pencil and very shaky.

"Will you excuse me?" I said to Felton, half absently, and then the sheet was in my hand. "Oh, my God!" I cried, "I thank Thee. I was right, Felton—right all the time. Daphne is not dead. She is alive. And I am going to bring her back to the Squire."

I was out in the hall in a moment. I forgot my hat. I opened the front door.

The butcher's dogcart was before it, a good horse in the shafts. I was up in a moment, and then was dimly aware that Felton, with surprising activity, had leaped up behind me. We were racing down the drive, as if the horse knew the importance of his mission.

"Where—is she?" Felton gasped, as we dashed out on the open road. "Where is she?"

"Over by Trescoë Moor. In an old house called the Grange. In the power—of a poor mad lady."

"And they say romance is dead!" I heard Felton say as he held on to the back of the seat. "They say romance is dead!"

* * * * *

I do not know how we made that long drive in the time we did. I did not spare the horse, and, fortunately for me, Bell was a great horse fancier, and had put in a fresh animal to come up. We did not speak much—I was too absorbed—but once Felton leaned over and addressed me.

"Why did you not run in and tell the Squire?"

"Because if—if there was delay—or if she is not there—the fresh blow would kill him. I want to put her into his arms."

He nodded slowly.

"Nothing will be wrong now, Carew. I feel that. Nothing will be wrong. Your quest is ended."

* * * * *

At last we were at the old gate of the avenue, and I managed to open it with great difficulty and get it to roll back on its hinges. The end of Daphne's little note kept ringing in my ear. She was better and safe, but she was in the power of a poor mad lady—she had fallen down the quarry, and been very ill. Men had searched the quarry the day after the wedding day, but now I remembered the rain had been very heavy, and I suppose all footmarks had been obliterated. We drove up the avenue very slowly; the horse was tired, and there were fallen branches lying all over the path. I had to get down more than once and drag them away. It was a deserted place, dreary and solitary, and when we came in sight of the old pile I could only think of Tennyson's "Moated Grange." Only one or two feeble lights

THE QUIVER

flickered from the windows. I had not even remembered that it was occupied. I got down, and so did Felton, and, my heart thudding with excitement, I rang the heavy hanging bell.

At first there came no answer, and, looking up, I could see long lines of old windows, and crumbling, old-fashioned green shutters, and a tangle of ivy and clematis, and climbing yellow Gloire de Dijon roses. I rang again. A great silence was everywhere. Behind us in the grass, dimly silhouetted against the evening sky of daffodil and creamy pearl, were the grotesque outlines of peacocks and pyramids, cut out in the yew. Beyond was the ghostly figure of a marble nymph.

"I must get in—I must!" I was saying impatiently to Felton, scarcely knowing what I said, when I heard a heavy bolt shot back, and a native, a tall man with a dark, impassive face, stood before me, swathed in white and turbanned.

"The mem sahib does not receive."

But I had caught a glimpse, through the open door and parted portiere, of a scene which will never escape my memory.

A little disc of light on an old rug by the hearth, and a high oak chair in which was the stately figure of a lady in white. Beyond her, on the sofa, peering forth into the gloom at the door, was a little white childlike face, with great blue eyes. Oh, such a little wan face! Faded, pallid, all the roses gone, almost all the youth—the ghost of herself, the ghost of the little girl-bride who had danced through the Hall in her wedding dress, with red lips, and roses in her cheeks that rivalled those in the Hall garden—but still Daphne. Thank God, my Daphne!

I pushed Felton aside, and I pushed the tall native aside. I was in the hall, seeing—thinking of nothing but the little eager, half-terrified face of my lost girl. I advanced towards her, my arms outstretched.

As I did so I heard a peculiar sound, a little glad cry. The strange, white-haired lady, who had been sitting in the high-backed chair had risen, too, and was now standing before me, obstructing my way. Before the glory of her eyes I stood dumb, bewildered.

"Amyas!" was breathed from her pale lips gaspingly. "Amyas, my beloved!"

And then, as if struck by a sword from behind, she caught her breath with a sharp,

shuddering sigh. Before I could reach or catch her, she fell as if struck to the earth, and Daphne and I were on the old prayer-rug beside her, Daphne trying to raise her head.

The lamplight fell on her face and on her white hair. The heavy eyelids flickered open for a moment, and rested on me, her lips smiled, tenderly and lovingly. She met Death with a glad glory of welcoming joy—she seemed to greet me—and then the light flickered, and was gone. There was a short, happy sigh.

"Who is she?" I whispered, catching my little girl's hands, and drawing her into my arms. "Who is she? Oh, Daphne! Daphne!"

"She is Mrs. Amyas Carew—your grandmother!" Felton spoke behind me. He was kneeling bareheaded, and one of the small, nerveless hands was in his. "It is Mrs. Amyas Carew! Dead! Dead! She thought that you were her husband. You are his living image. She died—happy-thinking that."

* * * * *

It was like a miracle, like a romance. Daphne told me all, seated on the old sofa, after the native servants and I had silently and reverently carried the white lady upstairs. Felton, his face hidden, sat near, as if utterly overpowered. He filled up the gaps we could not understand. He said she was not more than sixty-five. She had been married when a mere child. Her son had married at twenty-one, and died the year following. We learned later that she had never recovered the shock of the Mutiny—the nights of terror in the cellar, the horrors that followed. When she escaped, her brain was gone; her one idea to escape from all who had known her. Accompanied by her faithful ayah and the woman's husband, she had wandered over Europe, and finally come to England, not far from her old home, living on the sale of her wonderful jewels, and avoiding all chance of recognition. Few would have known her. And in ordinary conversation, as Daphne told me, she had no trace of madness at all.

My darling and I sat and talked, she nestled in my arms; I gave her time to recover, and then I got a cloak and carried her out to the dogcart. We must go back

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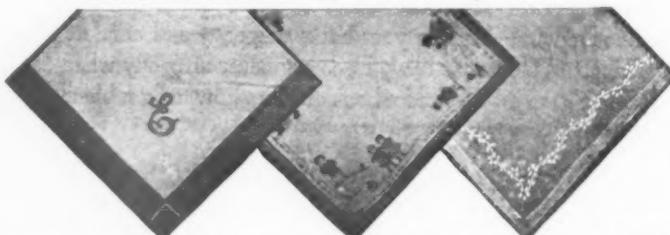
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LIVERPOOL.

DAPHNE ADAIR'S WEDDING



"She ran forward and clasped him in her arms,
I left them together"—p. 222.

more slowly, and it would be a long drive, but I must get her back to the Hall.

Felton accompanied us to the door. He shook his head when I asked if we should take him.

"No; the horse will need all its strength, and I—I will stay here."

A sound of wailing came then from the top of the stairs—a strange, sad sound. Daphne shivered.

"They loved her, they worshipped her," she whispered; "and they did not see her face, nor know how glad she was to die."

Felton looked up at us both. It was one of those moments in which a veil falls from a life, from a heart, for one brief moment.

"I loved her, too," he said. "I worshipped her. She never knew. No one ever knew."

We left him there.

* * *

The Squire was half asleep, they said. Very weak and low, but I knew that joy does not kill, and, taking Daphne in my arms, I carried her up the shallow oak steps, and laid her down in her own room, Dinah and Betty sobbing and exclaiming over her, while I went in.

The Squire looked up at me, an old man now, with a white moustache, and he nodded half querulously towards the nurse.

"She said you wouldn't come in—too late. I said you would—but you are late."

"Yes, but I was on a happy errand." I said, and I did not try to keep any gladness out of my voice. "I was suddenly sent for. Can you guess why, and for whom?"

He sat up. His lips parted.

"Oh, tell me—tell me at once! Daphne! It was Daphne? Amyas Carew! it will kill me if you say no. Do you hear? It will kill me."

"You are going to live," I said, and laughed aloud, "for she is here! She is here!"

"Bonny Kilmeny she gaed through th' glen."

How the words sang and danced in my head as I went down the corridor and into Daphne's room. They sang as I stooped and lifted her—such a light, light burden. And I could not help whispering the words of the old poem in her ear as I carried her away.

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny! where have you been?
Long have we sought beneath holt and dean,
By burn, by ford, by greenwood tree,
Kilmeny, Kilmeny! where have you been?"

She nestled in my arms, and the little flower face rested on my breast.

"Late, late in the gloaming, Kilmeny cam' home!"

Ah! that was true too.

THE QUIVER

I opened the door and let her go in. And with a glad, glad cry these two saw each other, and she ran forward and clasped him in her arms. I left them together, the Squire's white head on her breast. I went out to tell Dinah and Betty, and explain all. How "late, late in the gloaming," Kilmeny had come home.

* * * * *

The wedding day came. This time there was no sorrow, no tragedy.

She came up the aisle to meet me, her hand on the Squire's proud arm, all in snowy white, the filmy veil over her face. The solemn words began, and then all the world floated away, leaving us two to be made one. Love all around us, love in our hearts.

Yet behind a pillar I could see two dark faces, gazing as they always seem to do (for my grandmother's faithful servants will never leave us), as if back into the shadows—gazing into that strange world which we call the East, gazing back to where terror and tragedy and despair met, and yet where devotion and love had pierced the inky darkness and shot a light through the gloom.

Somewhere near was Felton, and I knew where his memory was.

All these thoughts mingled and swung around me. Then I was only conscious of my little girl's slight fingers in mine, and of the Vicar's voice—"I, Amyas, take thee, Daphne." And I repeated after him—we two alone before God—"I, Amyas, take thee, Daphne."

THE END





BOYS' AND GIRLS' PAGES

SANTA CLAUS' MISTAKE

By MARGARET BATCHELOR

I

IT was very early Christmas morning; it would have been quite dark in the bedroom, if it had not been for the bright street light outside the window.

Side by side against the wall stood two white beds. In one slept Charlie Kennedy, aged five; in the other, Donald Kennedy, aged seven, lay awake.

From the foot of each bed hung a stocking. "It looks like night out of doors," thought Donald. "But I b'lieve it is really morning, and if it is morning I shall just have one peep into my stocking to see what Santa Claus has brought me."

Donald slipped a bare pink foot cautiously out of bed, then the other followed, and in his blue and white striped pyjamas he crept to the well-filled stocking and emptied the contents on the quilt.

In the dim light he could see a ball, a knife, a Chinese puzzle, an orange, and a box of sweets, also a clockwork motor boat.

He put the things carefully back, then looked longingly at his brother's stocking.

"I'll just peep at Charlie's. That will be no harm," he thought.

Charlie had much the same as Donald, only in place of the clockwork motor boat there was a cannon. Donald handled it lovingly.

"Santa Claus ought to have known that I mean to be a soldier. He should have given me this cannon," he muttered. "Charlie is to be a sailor, so the motor boat would be just the thing for him. Santa Claus has made a mistake—that's what he has done."

Donald put back Charlie's presents and crept into his warm bed. But he could not sleep; he kept thinking of the cannon and the motor boat.

"I am sure Santa Claus has made a muddle about us. I shall set things right."

And so saying, Donald got out of bed once more, and put Charlie's cannon in his own stocking, and gave his brother the motor boat.

Having done this, Donald once more got into bed, and this time he soon went to sleep.

II

IT was Christmas Day and breakfast-time. Around the breakfast table in the dining-room, decorated with evergreens, sat Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, Donald, and Charlie, and their sisters Doris and Rose, whilst Uncle Bob was placed between Donald and Charlie, to see that they "behaved themselves," as he laughingly remarked.

As they were all chattering, Ellen, the parlourmaid, entered with a tray. On the tray was a letter.

"I wonder who it is from?" remarked Mrs. Kennedy. "I am sure the post has never arrived as early as this on Christmas Day."

"It is addressed to Master Donald and Master Charlie, and I found it in the drawing-room grate, ma'am. It looked just as if it had fallen down the chimney," said Ellen.

"What a peculiar place for a letter! Do let me see who it is from. Shall I read it out to you, boys?" asked his mother.

"Yes, please, mummy. I expect it is

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"What a peculiar place for a letter ! Do let me see who it is from. Shall I read it out to you, boys ?" asked his mother.

"Yes, please, mummy. I expect it is

THE QUIVER

from Santa Claus. I dare say he dropped it down the chimney in passing," said Donald.

Mother and father smiled at this suggestion, whilst Uncle Bob grinned broadly.

"Why, it is from Santa Claus, as you said," remarked Mrs. Kennedy, looking very surprised. He writes :

"DEAR DONALD AND CHARLIE,

"A line in great haste to say that I have just found I have made a mistake about the things I put in your stockings last night. I did not know before which of you had settled to be the sailor and which the soldier, or I should have given the presents differently. Now I know, and, to make up, please look in the porch, and the box of soldiers you will find there is for the boy who had the motor boat, and the box of sailors for the boy to whom I gave the cannon. I hope this will please you both. I should have left the soldiers and sailors in your bedroom, but it is nearly light as I write this, and I am of a nervous disposition, and should not like you to see me, as I am so shy.

"Your loving friend,

"SANTA CLAUS."

"How thoughtful of Santa Claus to write!" said Mrs. Kennedy. "I suppose Donald has the motor boat, so will get the box of soldiers; and Charlie has the cannon, so will have the sailors."

"No; I have got the motor boat," said Charlie. "And Donald has the cannon."

Donald did not say anything, but he looked very, very solemn.

"Oh, why did I change my motor boat for the cannon?" he thought.

He looked even more serious still when the parcels in the porch were opened, for the box of soldiers was the most splendid one he had ever seen. There were rows and rows of horse and foot soldiers, with shining swords and brightly-painted coats. The sailors were very nice, but nothing came up to soldiers in Donald's eyes.

"I think there has been some mistake," said Uncle Bob, noticing the piteous expression on his nephew's face. "I had a private talk with Santa Claus, and told him

particularly that you were to be the gallant soldier of the Kennedy family, and Charlie the sailor boy. There has been a mistake somewhere, I am sure."

As the hours of Christmas Day went by the Kennedy children, with happy, contented faces, played with their new toys—all but Donald, and he looked more and more solemn.

III

IT was Christmas night; Donald and Charlie were in bed. Charlie was asleep, but Donald lay awake. Presently manly footsteps passed the half-open door.

"Uncle, uncle—is that you?" called Donald.

"Yes; why aren't you asleep, young man?"

"I can't sleep; I am worried, uncle. Please sit on my bed, quite close to me. I want to confide in you."

Uncle Bob smiled in the dark.

"Speak on," he said.

"Uncle, you seem to know more about Santa Claus than the rest of us; you are friends with him, aren't you?"

"Yes; Santa Claus and I make little plans together sometimes. What is the matter?"

"Well, it is like this. I thought that Santa Claus had made a mistake when I saw the motor boat in my stocking and the cannon in Charlie's, so I thought I'd put the mistake right. If I had left them as they were, I should have had the soldiers; and I do want them."

"I thought something odd had happened," said Uncle Bob. "Another time you must leave Santa Claus to rectify his own mistakes. I am sorry about the soldiers, but you must be content with the sailors."

"I am awake," came from the other bed. "Donald can have the soldiers. I'd really rather have the sailors, but I did not like to say so," said Charlie.

So Donald had the soldiers and Charlie the sailors, and everyone was pleased.

And Donald has made up his mind not to interfere with Santa Claus' plans another Christmas.



How Stout People May Ensure Health, Comfort, and Normal Weight.

THERE is so much good work to be done in the world in the way of alleviating suffering that no helper can be spared. Yet how many men and women have reluctantly to abandon active work in the good cause for the reason that they themselves are in ill-health. There is a disease which claims many victims amongst the benevolent band. We allude to obesity, which, with many people, seems to develop without any accountable cause. Persons are afflicted with the seemingly unconquerable tendency to grow fat who are not only small eaters and teetotalers, but who have tried all sorts of dietary and drugging treatments in vain. They need not despair in the least; they have most obviously not yet tried the Antipon treatment for the permanent cure of obesity—permanent, because it is the one remedy which thoroughly triumphs over the persistent tendency just spoken of. That is the reason of its immense success and universal reputation. A short course of Antipon will bring back health, strength, and bodily comfort, will brace up the nervous system, and will ensure normal weight without dread of a return of the unnatural fatty excess. Our readers, moreover, who elect to essay the Antipon régime, need not fear that they will be half-famished into thinness by a non-nutritious or spare dietary. Antipon has a superb tonical effect on the digestive system, as hundreds of once stout men and women have gratefully recognised, and food of the most wholesome kind becomes a necessary factor in the Antipon method. Food means health and strength; Antipon will do the rest. There is a decrease of from 8 oz. to

3 lb. within a day and a night, after which a steady reduction is the order of the day; and as soon as the subject is quite satisfied with the diminution of weight the doses may cease altogether. Antipon is a harmless solution of purely vegetable ingredients.

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The *Graphic* says:—“A wonderful specific in the treatment of corpulence is Antipon, which causes a daily diminution of fat until normal weight is attained. The cure is lasting, and the treatment is harmless. The tonic effects of Antipon are wonderful; the

appetite is increased, digestion promoted, the blood purified, and the muscles strengthened.”

The *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* says: “I must say a good word for the Antipon cure of obesity, which I have reason to know has come off satisfactorily in a long-standing case. The advantage of this system is that it asks nothing in the way of sacrifice from the patient.”

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BUTTER SUGAR AND CREAM

HOW WE GOT OUR CHRISTMAS TREE

By HAROLD MURRAY

TO tell the truth, we do not trouble very much about the matter. Father bought it somewhere, and while we were asleep—or pretending to be—loving hands covered it with candles, and bags of sweets and toys and dolls and little flags, and made it shine and sparkle like the King's crown. But when we stand before it and clap our hands, and cry "O-o-o-oh!" we do not, as a rule, stop to bother as to how it is there comes to be such a thing as a Christmas tree at all.

As a matter of fact, a good many older people have tried to find out where the Christmas tree came from, but nobody seems to be quite certain yet as to how many years ago the good old custom was started.

Some learned men—who really wouldn't be very excited, like you or me, over the spangles and the sweets and the many coloured flags—have told us that it came from ancient Egypt. They say that at certain winter festivities the Egyptians used a slip of a palm tree with twelve shoots on it, this, of course, representing the year with its twelve months. I do not think, however, that our Christmas tree has anything to do with that twelve-shooted slip of palm. It is more probable that it is to be traced back through the old customs of the country which gave it to us—Germany.

Far away back in the ages—"once upon a time," as the fairy tales say—the people called Teutons believed all kinds of things about a mystic ash tree with the curious

name Yggdrasil. This, with its roots and branches, they thought, united the world of the living and the world of the dead. The branches of this tree, they supposed, bore gifts for men to take. There you have the idea which most probably led to the custom of having once a year a tree laden with presents.

When the custom really started just as we see it in our homes to-day is doubtful, but the people in the ancient city of Strasburg are proud of the fact that more than three hundred years ago they introduced it. The Christmas tree does not seem to have been mentioned in any book until the year 1605, when an unknown writer called attention to the new custom at Strasburg. In those days, however, the Church did not approve of the Christmas tree—I expect because it was of heathen origin—and we are told that a preacher named Professor Dannhauer, of Strasburg Cathedral, spoke very strongly against it. Nowadays, preachers do very differently, don't they? I have seen at least two well-known preachers in London helping to deck huge Christmas trees for the poor children at mission churches—and didn't they seem to enjoy it!

Well, the Christmas tree became very popular indeed in Germany, but you may be surprised to know that it is only about seventy years since it was brought to England. When Victoria the Good married Prince Albert in 1840, many new German customs were introduced into this country, and the Christmas tree was one of them. At



(Photo: Clarke and Hyde.)

OFF FOR THE MARKET.



COVENT GARDEN AT CHRISTMAS
TIME.

Windsor Castle in 1846 there was a huge tree forty feet high, which was laden with presents said to be worth no less than £9,000! That was something like a tree, wasn't it?—but I do not suppose it gave a bit more pleasure than the little tree you see in a poor man's cottage window.

Since then the Christmas tree has been a prominent feature of the Christmas festivities of the Royal Family. Queen Victoria encouraged the custom. On Boxing Day, 1899, she gave a treat to the wives and children of the soldiers who were serving in South Africa, and there was to be seen a monster tree, twenty-five feet high, weighed down with beautiful gifts. To-day, in spite of many people who seem to want to do

can count on going over the same strip of land once every five years. Suppose this year he takes his little boy four years old with him. Five years from now, all being well, he will take the boy again, now a lad, who can help him in his work. Five years later the boy can begin to chop for himself in the same spot, and at the end of another five years he will begin to count on the proceeds of the Christmas trees from this piece of land, and perhaps think about starting a little chap of his own in the business! So you see, a few acres of pines upon which vigorous trees will grow will support a family for generations. And let us hope it will be a long while before the Christmas trees are not wanted.

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away with the old customs we children think so much of—our pancake day, and our hot-cross-bun day and our May-garland day—our beloved Christmas tree does not seem to be in any danger. In Germany at Christmastime every house has its tree, and the trade in fir trees in every German town is enormous. In London something like 70,000 trees of various sizes are sold at Covent Garden.

I suppose the great thing in growing a Christmas tree is to make it grow evenly. A crooked Christmas tree is of no use whatever, and the men who have forests of these trees are obliged to give each plenty of space. A Christmas tree takes five years to grow. The woodman who raises them

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THE CHRISTMAS BELLS

By the Rev. J. G. STEVENSON

LONG years ago there lived in a far country an old, old man who was never deaf except at Christmastide. Even then there was only one sound he could not hear, and that was the pealing of the Christmas bells. When the streets were covered with snow, when happy children trod warily on their way to the Christmas morning service, when all eyes were bright and all hearts were happy, folk who met him in the road cried out "A merry Christmas! How beautiful is the pealing of the bells!" As they spoke he looked at them sourly, and, answering nothing, he muttered to himself alone, "Foolish people! I hear no bells, and yet I hear them speak! I do not believe there are any bells; and, if there are, no one is making them sound!" And mumbling quietly, and smiling at no one, he trudged to his solitary home, where he ate his dinner alone, and said how thankful he was no one else was there to share it, for he loved having all he had entirely to himself. Poor old man! Fancy, if you were like him!

Christmas went and New Year came; and soon the little lambs were shivering in the meadows. As they grew stronger on their shaky legs, spring called over the earth, and primrose and daffodil, and many another flower beside, made the world beautiful. Also, in the gardens of small children, the plants came forth so fast that scarcely anyone was tempted to pull them up to see if they were growing. Then at last June was here, and the sun shone everywhere with a silvery glory, and on half holidays small boys and girls gathered large buttercups in green meadows, and made chains of daisies, and were rather frightened when a mole ran by.

Even the old man who could never hear the Christmas bells felt that life was brighter, and decided one morning that he would take his dinner out into the fields, and have a picnic all alone. So he set forth with his food in a red handkerchief. Before he had gone far he was feeling quite pleased, though he did not know why; and the next minute he was thanking God he was alive.

This was rather strange, for it was a long time since he had prayed. Now, all men are the better for praying, and just as he

was feeling better, and was thinking he must soon pray again, close by the hedge he saw a small girl crying.

Ordinarily he would have taken no notice; but this day he stopped and said, "Peace, little one! Why those sorry tears?" The small girl was rather frightened at being spoken to like this, but she guessed the old man wished to be kind, so she sobbed out, "Oh, I'm so hungry; my mother is poor, and works in the fields, and she had no food to give me before she started out this morning!" And her tears came afresh. Before he himself knew what he was doing, the old man had opened his kerchief, and was giving the small girl the bread and meat he had prepared for his own dinner. Some small girls can eat a lot, and this one ate as if she was very hungry.

While she was eating, suddenly he heard a strange sound; but he took little notice, and kept on feeding her until she had finished the whole of his dinner. Then he heard the strange sound again, and another, and another, and all were exceeding pleasant to hear. At last there came a rush of melody, and the old man, understanding, said, "Why, I am listening to the Christmas bells!" He asked the small girl if she heard anything, but she was too busy, feeling satisfied with so much dinner, and she said she heard nothing. But still the old man heard the bells of Christmas pealing; and at last he ran to the high road and told a passer-by about it. "There are no bells near here!" said the passer-by, "and, if there were, this is June, and not December. You are mad, old man. Run away and think!" So he ran away and thought—and, thinking, he understood. "I know," he said to himself. "I know! Those only hear the Christmas bells aright who are generous to others, and show to them the spirit of Jesus. These many years I was greedy, and gave nothing to those who were poorer than I, and so I was deaf to the bells. But now that I have been kind, lo, Christmas bells in June!" And he walked along, a new old man, happy and smiling.

I wonder, do children know that if you want to hear the Christmas bells aright you must first give something to someone who is poorer than yourself!

THE STORY OF ROBIN REDBREAST

By EMILY HUNTLEY

HAVE you ever walked through the fields on a winter's day and found a single brave little daisy looking up at you with its starry eye? Is it not a greater treasure than all the flowers of the summer hedgerow? There is never a time in England when, if you look, you may not find some sweet flower friend, from the golden dandelion to the delicate harebell, braving frost and snow in some sheltered corner and saying to us—

"Sure is the summer, and sure is the sun;
Night and the winter are shadows that run."

So we love the winter flowers, and we love, too, the merry little robin who cheers the snowy days more than all the birds that sing when the flowers bloom. We scarcely notice his song in summer amid all the music of lark and thrush and blackbird; but its first note wakes us on the gloomy morning as he trills, "Please, have you forgotten my breakfast?" And of all the crowd of hungry birds that leave their footprints in the snow where the crumbs were scattered we love best the brave little songster whose sweetest carol rings through the darkest days.

Have you heard of Marie's robin? Marie was a little French girl who lived with her mother in a cottage close by a wood. Marie's mother was so poor that she could not buy her any stockings—only a pair of wooden shoes which she called *sabots*. When Christmas came little Marie had no stockings to hang up for Santa Claus to fill, so she put out her small wooden shoes. And in the morning what do you think she found? There, on her shoe, perched a robin redbreast, and when Marie went softly up to him he only put his head on one side and chirped as though to say, "A merry Christmas to you!" And Marie's breakfast of bread and milk tasted all the sweeter because she scattered some crumbs for robin, and the snowy day grew brighter for robin's cheery song. All through that winter robin was Marie's constant friend. Sometimes he flew to the holly bush just to tell the other birds that that was still his own ground, but always he came home again, and Marie would not have exchanged him for the most expensive toy in all France.

Would you like to hear the story of our little English robin? The story begins with St. Valentine's day. That was when he chose his mate and set abroad to seek a home. What a twittering there was that day, for the thrushes, too, were busy in the hedgerow, the starlings by the chimney-pots, and the rooks in the bare elm trees. But robin found a place to his liking close to the house where little Maggie lived who had been kind to him all the winter. Perhaps it was she who had hung the old kettle on the tree; at any rate, it was just the kind of place a robin loves, and at once he took possession. First, he perched on the old kettle spout and sang his loudest song, and all the other robins understood that he was singing, "This is my very own home, and I am prepared to defend it against all comers."

Then they, too, ruffled their feathers and sang, for they, too, had their homes in strange enough places. One was in the pocket of the gardener's old coat, which hung in the tool-house; one was in a soap box; one right in the centre of a pot of ferns; for all robins seem to love odd corners, and like to be near their human friends.

At first it was Mrs. Robin who did nearly all the work. She brought the dead leaves and moss and dried roots and strands of hay which made the foundation; she followed the maids at mat-shaking, and darted down for tempting bits of wool and hair; she followed the groom's brush, and caught the loose horsehairs; while robin jerked from place to place or sang his sweetest songs, and only now and then fussily brought a twig and stuck it loosely into the nest. Really, when it was finished it was a very untidy nest, after all; but Mrs. Robin smoothed out a soft hollow with her breast, and thought there never had been such a home.

And now her nesting time had come, for there were five tiny speckled eggs to be sat on. It was rather trying, sitting there so long, and all kinds of things happened to frighten her. Once the black cat came prowling up the tree, but though he was near enough for her to see his great green eyes she never moved, only her heart went

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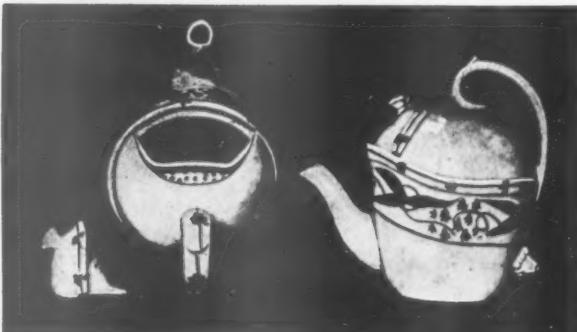
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THE STORY OF ROBIN REDBREAST

pit-a-pat, and Mr. Robin set up such an awful screech that little Maggie ran out to see what had happened, and pussy was glad to slink away.

On another day Maggie's father lifted her up and told her she might stroke Mrs. Robin ever so gently, and that, too, was a little frightening to so young a mother.

But one fine morning there was a stir in the nest, and one tiny chick came out, then another and another till there were five ! That was a proud day for Mrs. Robin. Not every mother could boast that every egg had hatched, and to her those little naked creatures with their great gaping beaks were the handsomest children in all the world.

There is no more resting now for her, nor for Mr. Robin either, for five hungry mouths take some feeding. Long before daylight Maggie would wake and hear robin's song. There might still be some night-moths abroad, and these would do well for an early breakfast. Then the gardener will be digging soon, and Robin will hop after his spade, for that is where you can find juicy worms. And Mrs. Robin will seek for grubs and caterpillars, and save the gardener many a pest in the later year.

You will scarcely believe that one day those greedy robin babies had *four hundred meals*, and I am sure you will understand that when at last their feather coats began to grow and their little wings to flutter, both father and mother were glad to know that their work would soon be ended. We wonder, indeed, however robin could find heart to sing so cheerfully with so much to do ! Yet, however late in the evening he

might have to fly abroad, he never went to bed without first having a good cold bath in the little water dish by Maggie's door.

It was weary work teaching those babies to fly ; again and again they fluttered helplessly from the branches, yet the little teachers never lost patience. Even when they could fly, they still wanted father and mother to feed them, and it was only after many lessons that they learnt to peck for themselves. And if you could have heard them learning to sing you would have laughed very much.

But at last the day came when father and mother said good-bye to their children and went off to the woods for a holiday. It was moulting time, and no self-respecting Robin will allow himself to be seen when his coat is all draggled and his feathers falling out. The young ones in the home garden moulted, too ; their first speckled feathers dropped out, and in their places came the first orange red breast and the pretty buff wing tips. And, do you know, when Mr. Robin came back

one day from the woods, wearing his own new winter coat, and saw some smart young robins strutting about in *his* holly bush, he did not know they were his own children, but he drove them away to find places of their own ! But that was really the very best thing for them, for winter was coming, and each robin must have his own feeding ground.

Wintry days are here, but robin's song will sound as clear as ever. He has learnt to trust his little human friends, and they will not forget him this Christmas-time.



(Photo : C. Kearton.)

ROBIN REDBREAST AT HOME.

HOW, WHEN AND WHERE CORNER

A Christmas Chat between Ourselves

By "ALISON"

MY DEAR COMPANIONS,

Our first Christmas in our Corner together, already! It seems almost impossible to believe, so quickly have the months flown. But now it is here—or will be within a short time of when your eyes find these pages. We must greet each other. Let me tell you a secret. I am at this moment of writing trying to guess (with a bit of excitement, let me say) how many of my Companions, if any, will write to wish me a Happy Christmas! If I could, I should like to write to each of you and give you my good wishes. That would be a big order, though. So I want each boy and girl to feel that I mean *you* when I say, "I wish you a very happy Christmas and a bright, glad New Year." And if you each try to give *some one* the jolliest Christmas possible you will find it to be your own most beautiful one.

I have been wondering if you ever hear the talk of the Trees and the Flowers as you walk in the country; for they do talk, you know. The *very*, very grown-up folk may not believe it. Perhaps they never heard. Or their memories may have grown rusty. But even in London and Manchester and Liverpool and Glasgow—in all the big towns, in fact, as well as in the country—you may catch whispers in the old gardens or the parks. You need to shut out the noise of the traffic and walk softly, for Tree and Flower conversations are usually hushed and low.

There is one important thing to know, if you want to hear their talk; and that is that it is only by the gentle and kind that the fairies and the spirits of the flowers will be understood. If you are clumsy and harsh, then you cannot learn their language. If you are loving and patient, it will be learnable, bit by bit.

Funnily enough, I was thinking of you all the other afternoon when out for a walk, and it was then I heard a conversation about which I want you to hear. Of course, it isn't a bit nice to listen to other people's conversation, as a rule, and it is entirely unpardonable to repeat private talk. But this is an exception; and I think the Trees

and Flowers would be very glad to know that they had cheered a Human as they cheered me and, I hope, as they will cheer you.

The conversation had already started when I walked down the lane. The Pine trees were repeating most vigorously, "It will be your turn soon—it will be your turn soon," moving their arms to and fro in emphasis. So I looked shyly to see who it was they were addressing. This happened on an autumnal day. The wind blew so coldly, and the sky was so grey with fast-moving clouds, that it was quite wintry. That fact accounts for Mrs. Holly being awake. As some of you know, Mrs. Holly sleeps through the summer, and wakes in time for a busy career at Christmas.

"It will be your turn soon," the Pines continued. Then there came the sound of another voice, so miserable and croaky was it that I could hardly believe my eyes and ears when I found it came from the Holly tree below the Pines. She usually is so chirpy and gay that I knew she must have the blues very badly to speak in that tone.

"Oh, dear!" she cried, with tears glistening in her eyes, "whatever is the good of poor dull me? Your beautiful pink faces brighten this dark lane," she continued, touching the Campions by her side. "And you"—pointing to the Convolvulus that clambered over the Hawthorn opposite, "everyone admires your white bells and the bright green of your leaves. Just look at poor dowdy me!"

A patch of blue Forget-me-nots peeped out of the greenery a little way off, and Mrs. Holly pointed to them next, with a deep sob: "And you—you're the favourite of all!"

Then, to my surprise, the other three Hollies joined in the doleful chorus. This was a proof that they had all waked too soon, before their own beautiful garments were finished.

You would have been as curious as I was by that moment, probably. Without a word, I waited. Softly there sounded a peal from the white bells opposite. Soon the words

HOW, WHEN AND WHERE CORNER

of the *Convolvulus*' song reached me distinctly, and the refrain ended thus :

"I'll be happy while I may,
Though I only live a day,
And I'll sing for those who love me."

Then, ever so faintly, though steadily, the refrain was caught up by the *Forget-me-nots* in their little corner. They altered the words slightly, and sang :

"I am happy while I sing,
Though I'm such a little thing,
For I live for those who love me."

By that time I longed to say something, for Mrs. Holly looked most dejected still, though she had listened to every word that had been uttered.

"You foolish old thing," I began, biting my lip as I realised that that was rather a disrespectful salutation for the venerable Mrs. Holly. "Have you forgotten," said I, "that Christmas is coming, and by the time you are ready you will wake to find yourself Queen of the Day, and we shall all be paying you homage? Have you forgotten the old song we sing :

"So now is come our joyfulllest feast,
Let everyone be jolly;
Each room with Ivy leaves is drest,
And every post with Holly'?"

Then will be *your* royal season."

"How silly of me!" she cried. "I *had* forgotten." The jealous mood was passing away.

At that moment there came a sturdy "Hear, hear!" from the Ivy. "I am too busy to talk to-day, as I have so many new leaves to feed," she added, dancing in a jubilant fashion about her old Oak.

It was nearly my teatime, so I could not stay much longer. Mrs. Holly was getting drowsy again. Evidently she had comfortable thoughts to sleep with now, and the dear Pines' slumber song chorus—

"It will be *your* turn soon,
If you wait in patience still,
It will be *your* turn soon"—

was the last I heard that afternoon.

As I fled along the road I imagined how Mrs. Holly would look as Christmas-time drew near, when the wee flowers she did

not feel proud of then had become the lovely berries we like so much. And all sorts of Christmas thoughts came after that one. The Tree talk reminded me of a beautiful old legend. Perhaps some of you have heard it. The story says that every Christmas Eve the Christ-Child visits our earth, and stays in the home which He finds most fully prepared for His coming. Sometimes there are few *really* ready, and He has to wander a long, long way before He can rest. Often He passes by the places lavishly decorated and finely furnished for His coming. With His wonderful insight He can tell where it is only show, and where it is done for strong love of Him. And sometimes the place of His abiding is the very last place you or I would have chosen. Perhaps it is poor and unheard of; but He sees there some beautiful love—that of a young girl, or a boy, or a man or woman who really *cares*, and there He spends His birthday again.

Can you think of anything more lovely than that the Christ-Child should be your guest? Who knows? Perhaps, as the Pine Trees sang, "It will be your turn soon," and Christmas may bring you unexpected joy and honour. But for His coming the heart must be filled with love and sweetness, and must spend it for others, and possibly, afterwards, one of those *others* may prove to have been the Christ unknown. Then your happiness will be very, very great, and you will understand that wonderful saying of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these My brethren ye did it unto Me." And there will be no gladder singers on Christmas Day in the grand chorus that rises from all the earth :

"Glory to God in the highest,
On earth peace and good will to men."

Remember the *Forget-me-nots*, and write and tell me if you think their song is true.

With love, dear Companions,
I am, Your Friend,

Alison.

Our Portrait Gallery

Reaching the Masses

THERE are few clergymen as successful in reaching the masses as the Rev. F. Swainson, the Vicar of St. Barnabas, Holloway. The parish he works in is a vast one of some 13,000 souls, and a large portion of it is described in Charles Booth's book, "Marked black and blue," which means crime.

"We have a Bible class with a membership of 800 men," says Mr. Swainson, "which meets every Sunday afternoon during the year. We meet for prayer for a quarter of an hour, and then led by a band, and a number of men in procession, and a small army of scouts, we go throughout the whole bounds of the parish. I take a megaphone, through which I give out little Gospel messages and invitations to the Bible class. We visit the public-houses as they are closing, and gather in the men and bring them into the Bible class. And it is a Bible class which shows the simple power of God's Word. We do not even indulge in solos, we never discuss politics or anything outside the Bible; and yet we have some hundreds of men Sunday after Sunday, sitting very quietly drinking in God's Word.



THE REV. F. SWAINSON.

We get all sorts and conditions present. In one of our marches round, one Sunday I came across about twenty men, without coats, waistcoats, or collars. They were loafing outside a public-house. I stopped, and suggested that they should all come up to the men's meeting. They objected because of shortness of clothes. I said to one man, 'Where is your coat?' He said, 'Guv'n'er, I put it up the spout

last night to pay the rent.' I said, 'If you will come up and sit with us, I will preach without my coat. I'll do this if you will all come up.' They agreed, and they all came up. So I took my coat off, and I preached in my shirt sleeves, to the dismay of some of the orthodox. The result is this. One man told me he had not been into a place of worship for three-and-thirty years till then, and that man has been a changed man ever since. More than that, he shows the change in giving up drink, and getting his two elder sons to come to the Bible class."



A Chorister at Ninety

MR. GEORGE ARNOLD, whose portrait we present, is probably the oldest regular member of a church choir to celebrate Christmas this year. He has been a member of the choir of Holy Trinity Church, Bosham, Sussex, for more than eighty years, he having first sung treble in the choir in 1829.



(Photo: Baker.)
MR. GEORGE ARNOLD.

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— THE —
Children's Hour

Preface by HALL CAINE

is the general title of the work, and the names of authors here given are but a small proportion of the who's of the writers

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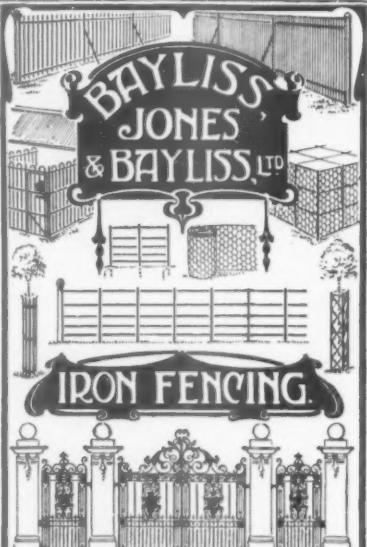
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Sunday School Pages

POINTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES

DECEMBER 5th. PAUL ON THE GRACE OF GIVING

2 Corinthians viii. 1-15

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The apostle's appeal for the poor saints at Jerusalem. (2) The example of Christ. (3) Giving with a willing mind.

Giving to the Lord

IN this lesson the Apostle Paul has something to say on the subject of giving. We know that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, and that what we give to His cause is given to Himself. Freely we have received from the Lord, and just as freely ought we to give, though this is not the policy that is generally pursued. There are many, however, who give liberally out of their limited income, and such a case was reported quite recently in the report of a missionary society. A foreman employed as a painter in the works of a railway in the North of England, being the holder of a Church Missionary Society box, brought it to the clergyman of the parish to be opened. "I don't know how much you will find in it," he said, "but I expect about £20, or perhaps a little more. I put in ten shillings every week out of my wages of £3, and now and then I have added an extra half-sovereign." The astonished minister hardly knew what to think or say, but he proceeded to empty the box, which was found to contain the almost incredible sum of £35. This surprising amount was all given by a man earning only £3 a week.

The story, however, does not end here. The liberal donor was seventy years of age, and, as he was feeling the infirmities of his advanced years, he had been told by his doctor that he really must give up his work, for it was too much for him, especially as he had to be on duty at the early hour of six in the morning, remaining at his post till the same hour in the evening. The thought of giving up was a heavy trial to him, as he had no other means of gaining a livelihood. Going to the head of his department, he said he would be obliged to leave; but instead of his resignation being accepted, as seemed likely, he was told that a younger man would be appointed to assist him, and that in future he would have shorter hours and less work. And thus God, in His goodness, relieved the anxious mind of His servant who had shown such wonderful self-denial, and most un-

expectedly provided for him in his old age. It is as true to-day as ever that "Whatever, Lord, we lend to Thee, repaid a thousand-fold will be."

A Practical Prayer

It is easy to shift our responsibility on to others in the matter of contributing to God's cause, but each individual has his or her share to bear, and should bear it. A member of a church got to be interested in foreign missions. Then he began to pray, "Lord, if Thou has not anybody to send, send me." Then he changed his prayer, "Lord, send me, but if Thou canst not send me, send somebody." Finally, he said, "Lord, send whom Thou wilt, but help me to bear my share of the expenses." Then the Gospel became to him a reality, and giving to the cause of Christ a pleasure.

DECEMBER 12th. PAUL'S LAST WORDS

2 Timothy iv. 1-18

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The importance of preaching the Word. (2) Paul's confidence with regard to his reward. (3) The apostle deserted by his friends. (4) Deliverance through Christ.

"GENERAL, didn't I lead them straight?" These are the words said to have been addressed by Commander Rawson to his chief, Lord Wolseley, when dying in the trenches at Tel-el-Kebir. The Apostle Paul was a true leader in the battle, a sure guide in all perplexities, a real shepherd of the sheep; and so he could say with all confidence, as the end came in sight, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

Though forsaken by his earthly friends, Paul bears proud testimony to the fact that in his hour of trial "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." And that has been the experience of Christ's followers from that day till this. Earthly friends may forsake and earthly supports give way, but Jesus Christ never leaves nor forsakes those who put their trust in Him.

The Only Way

Paul gives a warning against unsound doctrine. That warning is needed to-day as much as ever. "In our zeal to get people into church fellowship," says Gipsy Smith,

THE QUIVER

"we have widened the doors, we have lowered the standard, we have preached the love of God till the people are love-sick. The presentation of a hodge-podge religion will never save anybody. Nothing but the piercing, pungent, personal, penetrating, unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ will save men from sin."

DECEMBER 19th. REVIEW

NOTHING stands out more distinctly in the lessons of the past quarter than the unconquerable courage and devotion of the Apostle Paul. In spite of his chains, he was ever preaching and presenting Jesus Christ. No matter what it cost him, he was a faithful and a loyal servant of his Master. Devotion to an unpopular cause often means sacrifice and suffering ; it did so in the case of Paul. A young man in a London omnibus noticed the blue ribbon total abstinence badge on a fellow-passenger's coat, and asked him, in a bantering tone, how much he got for wearing it. "That I cannot say," replied the other, "but it costs me about twenty thousand pounds a year." The wearer of the badge was Frederick Charrington, son of a rich brewer, who had given up all connection with the business that had made his father wealthy because he wanted to obey his conscience.

What Christianity has Done

Paul was one of the founders of the Christian religion, and he laboured with all his might to make the foundation sure and strong. What triumphs the once-despised Christian religion has accomplished since his time ! James Chalmers, the martyred missionary of New Guinea, in addressing a large meeting in London on one occasion, said : "I have had twenty-one years' experience among the South Sea Islanders, and for at least nine years of my life I have lived with the savages of New Guinea. I have seen the semi-civilised and the uncivilised ; I have lived with the Christian native, and I have lived, dined and slept with the cannibal. But I have never yet met a single man or woman, or a single people, that your civilisation without Christianity has civilised. Wherever there has been the slightest spark of civilised life in the Southern Seas, it has been because the Gospel has been preached there ; and wherever you find in the island of New Guinea a friendly people, or a people that will welcome you, there the missionaries of the Cross have been preaching Christ."

234

DECEMBER 26th. THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Matthew ii. 1-12

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The fear of the wicked Herod. (2) The joy of the Wise Men. (3) Treasures for the infant Jesus.

Jesus Christ the Saviour

JESUS CHRIST came to this earth that He might save us from our sins. He is the one and only Saviour of men, and no one who has ever come to Him has been turned away. With outstretched arms He stands inviting all to come to Him—"Whosoever will may come."

In "Black Rock" Ralph Connor draws an imitable picture of Christmas Eve in a lumber camp. Mr. Craig, the brave minister, is telling anew the wonderful story of the birth of Christ ; and his voice grows soft as he recalls his own boyhood, when he "used to be a little afraid of the angels, because a boy told me they were ghosts ; but my mother told me better, and I didn't fear them any more. But one Christmas Eve," he went on, in a lower, sweeter tone, "there was no one to tell me the story, and I grew to forget it, and went away to college, and learned to think that it was only a child's tale and not for men. Then bad days came to me, and worse, and I began to lose my grip of myself, of life, of hope, of goodness, till one black Christmas, in the slums of a far-away city—when I had given up all, and the devil's arms were about me—I heard the story again. And as I listened with a bitter ache at my heart, for I had put it all behind me, I suddenly found myself peeking under the shepherds' arms with a child's wonder at the Baby in the straw. Then it came over me like great waves that His name was Jesus because it was He that should save men from their sins. Save ! Save ! The waves kept beating upon my ears, and before I knew I had called out, "Oh, can He save me ?" It was in a little mission meeting on one of the side streets, and they seemed to be used to that sort of thing there, for no one was surprised ; and a young fellow leaned across the aisle to me and said, "Why, you just bet He can !" His surprise that I should doubt, his bright face and confident tone, gave me hope that perhaps it might be so. I held to that hope with all my soul, and—stretching up his arms, and with a quick glow in his face and a little break in his voice—"He hasn't failed me yet ; not once, not once ! "

That is the universal testimony of all who have put their trust in Him. He has never failed them, and He never will.

And that is the great message of Christmas.

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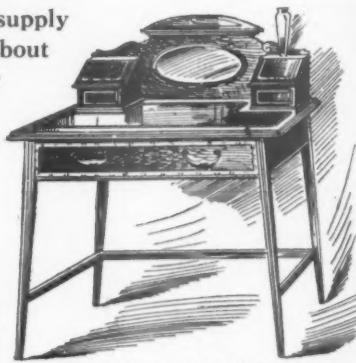
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The Crutch-and-Kindness League

By the Rev. J. REID HOWATT

THIS is pre-eminently the age of the child. And the child has been waiting a long time for that age to come. For centuries on centuries he was unheard of. The father was everything then ; it was only at the rarest intervals the mother fitted into sight ; the child was no child, he was only the offspring of the parents. I fancy it must be a survival of that remote period which causes the little ones still to be gravely told that "Children should hear, but not speak ; they should see, but not be seen"—a sage utterance which in these days is more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

The Golden Age of the Child

But the child has now come into his own. His golden age began when the Gospel uttered the loving words, "The young Child and His mother." We are familiar enough with the thought that it was then the emancipation of woman began, and so truly, but you can no more emancipate woman without emancipating the child than you can rear flowers in the sunshine while keeping their fragrance under lock and key.

The child is now in the forefront—in pictures, sculpture, books, society—everywhere. He stands for everything that is blithe and gay, happy and radiant. And as we watch his ways, his gambols, carelessness and sweet sauciness, we go back to our humdrum life with some scent of the same qualities in ourselves.

I suppose this is why we love chiefly to watch children at play. We reckon they should be always playing ; it is unnatural for them to be serious, careful and pre-occupied—they will have enough of that, we say, by-and-by ; let them store up sunshine at the start. And it is all right, and as it should be.

A Picture to Ponder On

But here is a picture worth glancing at. A poor, little room which has to serve for kitchen, bedroom and parlour in one. A patient mother with a careworn, "auld-farrant" baby sometimes on one arm, sometimes on the other, while she works about with the free hand. On the bed a large-eyed, pale, thin-faced laddie, watching dreamily mother's every movement. He cannot stir ; he is in splints—a cripple.

The days are so long to him, puir laddie. His hands are free, but he has nothing to handle : no toys, no pictures, no pet ; mother's too poor ; she can only give what every true mother does give—herself. And she does it as best she can, poor soul, inventing tales, raising visions by chatter, chatter—till she has to go out, and the little prisoner of God has only the low ceiling to look at.

This is no fancy sketch ; it is a miniature photograph of the daily condition of thousands on thousands of child-cripples in London alone. Who, that has anything of the child in himself or herself, but feels a throb of compassion for the little sufferers who have all the child's desires and the child's instincts, but with no outlet because father, a labouring man, and mother, a toiling, loving woman, are too poor to find even the commonest toys round which a child's wondrous imagination can play ? Who, with a warm heart, but longs to lean over the child and explain a picture to him or twiddle a toy ?

An Appeal to Parenthood

Most people have so much of the parental instinct in them, whether or not they have children of their own. But how are they to give scope to the good feeling ? Some live in lonely places, some are cumbered with necessary work, some are invalids, some are at school. The Crutch-and-Kindness League opens the way to all. It makes the Postal Union reach out loving hands to take and deliver these helps for the little afflicted ones. For to each member of the League is given the name, address, and particulars of one of these little ones for the purpose of writing a letter once a month ; or, if too busy, sending a toy, a picture post-card, or old illustrated paper or magazine. It needs little imagination to understand the uplifting this gives to the little hearts. This thought of having a friend somewhere out in the big world has such a widening influence on the young heart, and the letters are read and re-read, and the toys fondled and proudly shown month after month, wonderfully shortening the long days.

It is a sweet work of love for old and young, those dwelling in the uttermost parts of the earth no less than for those in the metropolis itself. And there is only one fee for membership (one shilling), just enough

THE QUIVER

to meet expenses, while a beautiful card of membership, for framing, is given each.

All further particulars concerning the League may be had for a stamp from SIR JOHN KIRK, Secretary, Ragged School Union, 32, John Street, Theobald's Road, London, W.C.

New Members for the Month

Miss F. Ashton, Sheffield ; Miss M. N. Atkinson, Sandown, Isle of Wight.

Miss Ruth Beer, Beckenham, Kent ; Miss C. H. Berkeley and Mrs. A. L. Bowen, Barbados, B.W.I. ; Master W. Bridgwater, Sidcup, Kent ; Miss E. R. Broome, Enfield, Middlesex ; Miss Dorothy Burbidge, West Ham, Essex.

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Mrs. Donovan, Wellington, New Zealand ; Mr. Herbert Dutton, Bath.

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Miss M. Gardner, Kineton, Warwick ; Miss H. G. Grimmett, Euston Road, N.W.

Miss Hellier, Mowbray, Cape Town, C.C. ; Mrs.

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Miss Elizabeth Service, Gilmerton, Midlothian ; Miss Maude Shrimpton, Reading ; Miss Agnes Stoten, Hampstead Heath ; Mr. and Mrs. Swan, Greenock, N.B. ; Nurse Sweatman, Chester.

Miss Charity Trump, Sidmouth ; Mrs. Wiber, Rudgwick.

Miss Kit Woodland, Mowbray, Cape Town, C.C. ; Miss Beta Wright, Dunedin, New Zealand.

The League of Loving Hearts

A DIVISION of the contributions received from members of the League of Loving Hearts was made recently, and a cheque for one-tenth of the total amount was sent to each of the societies which the League helps.

The following are some of the letters of thanks which have been received from different societies :—

Sir John Kirk writes :—“ Most heartily do I thank you and the members of the League of Loving Hearts for your kind contribution sent on behalf of the work. We greatly appreciate this practical sympathy and interest in our poor and needy bairns.”

Mr. William Baker writes on behalf of Dr. Barnardo's Homes :—“ I acknowledge with most grateful thanks the welcome sum which you have sent in aid of our work from the members of the League of Loving Hearts in connection with THE QUIVER. The gift will help to relieve the heavy burdens which press upon our shoulders during the present season, when naturally the claims of the children fall into the background, although the work of child-rescue and training continues without abatement.”

Mr. H. C. Crosfield, in acknowledging the

cheque for the Church Army, says :—“ We are most grateful to you and to them for this kindly assistance. May we ask you to convey to your members the expression of our warmest acknowledgments, and not only that, but the gratitude of the homeless, starving, and outcast people whom this gift will help us to comfort and uplift ? ”

Mr. Alexander Grant, Secretary for the Orphan Working School, writes :—“ It has been a great pleasure to me to receive your kind letter with cheque, the contributions from the members of the League of Loving Hearts to the funds of this charity. Will you be so good as to convey to the members of the League our warmest thanks for this generous help and sympathy ? We are much cheered by the interest they have thus shown in the welfare and happiness of the 500 orphan children in our Homes.”

Mr. Edgar Penman, the Secretary for the British Home and Hospital for Incurables, asks us “ to present our best thanks to the members of the League of Loving Hearts, and say how pleased we should be to see any of them at the Home at Streatham any afternoon.”

Similar letters have been received from the other societies.

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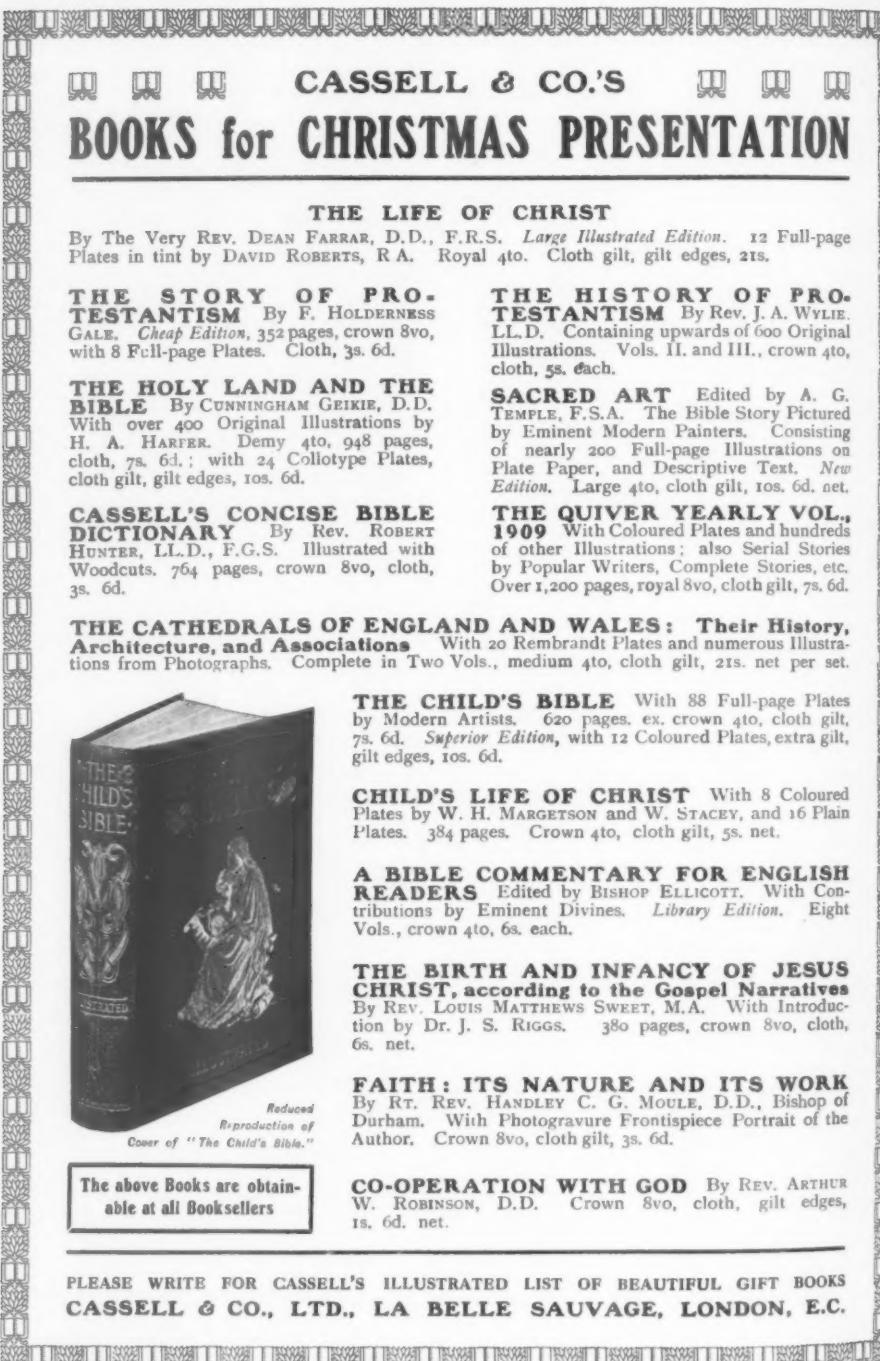
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Our Competition

By THE EDITOR

**First Prize: A Splendid Sewing Machine
Six Prizes of "Thermos" Flasks
Twelve Handsome Book Prizes**

EVERYTHING points to a successful issue with our new Doll Dressing Competition. Early in October the first parcel arrived. When we opened it we found two neatly-dressed dolls—just a foretaste of the many hundreds to come later on. I must confess that sometimes, when I think of the stream of dolls pouring into this office, I get strange misgivings. Where shall we store them all? How long will it take to unpack and examine them? But these misgivings speedily disappear before the thought of the thousands of native girls and women to whom this competition will bring pleasure and brightness.

Christmastide is almost on us, and we shall be largely occupied with the good work of enjoying ourselves, and bringing enjoyment to others. Possibly there may be some spare time that readers can devote to dressing the dolls for this competition. If so, nothing could be more suitable.

I have just received a letter from the secretary of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society asking that some of the dolls dressed by our competitors be sent to them. "The demand upon us for dolls, both for schools and hospitals, is considerable," she says. "We endeavour to send out between 11,000 and 12,000 each year." I shall, of course, be very pleased to send a consignment to this society.

THE LATEST DATE.

May I repeat the announcement that the latest date for sending the dolls is January 31st? There is no need to wait until then. They may be sent at once. Perhaps, however, competitors will remember the heavy demands made on the postal authorities during the actual Christmas week, and refrain from posting their parcels during the week preceding December 25th.

Care should be taken in packing, so that the little packages are not damaged, and special care should be taken that the address is securely attached. Address the parcels to

THE EDITOR,

"THE QUIVER,"

La Belle Sauvage,

London, E.C.

marking on the left-hand bottom corner, "Competition." No money should be sent

inside the parcels. If readers wish to join the League in order to compete, their contribution must be sent separately.

Competitors must see that a label containing their own name and address is securely attached to the doll itself. "Miss" or "Mrs." should be designated.

POINTS TO REMEMBER.

All competitors must be members of the League of Loving Hearts. In order to join the League, the coupon in our advertisement section must be signed and sent with a shilling (which is divided between ten philanthropic societies) to the Editor.

The dolls must not cost more than one shilling each—*including dressing*. One or two readers seem to be in some doubt on this point. It does not mean that one shilling is to be spent on the doll, and another shilling on the dressing, but that the *total cost* is not to exceed one shilling. Of course, little odds and ends which have not to be purchased need not be included in the cost.

THE DOLLS TO SEND.

All the dolls sent in for this competition are to be of use in the mission field. It is, therefore, important to remember the hints I gave last month as to the kind of dolls that are acceptable. The principal things to note are these:—

(1) All the dolls should be dark-haired, or dark-headed; light hair is despised in Oriental countries. (2) They should not have white dresses; plain white is the colour of mourning and the badge of widowhood in India. (3) They should not be made of wax, for wax melts quickly in hot countries. (4) They should not be nigger dolls. Black-faced dolls are not appreciated by natives.

THE PRIZES.

One of Frister and Rossmann's magnificent hand and treadle Sewing Machines is offered for the best-dressed doll. The next six prizes consist of "Thermos" flasks, and in addition there will be twelve handsome book prizes. So that in all there will be nineteen prizes.

I trust that a large number of my readers are now busy, and that the response will be as hearty as could be desired.

For the Sick and Aged

Some Christmas Calls for Help and Cheer

CHRISTMAS is essentially the time for the exercise of Christian charity, and whilst there are many noble institutions asking our sympathy and support, there are particular classes of the community who seem to have special claims on our help. At Christmas time we think of the poor, the sick, and the aged.

INVALID CHILDREN.

One's heart is drawn out to children whose Christmas is clouded by sickness. To such the Invalid Children's Aid Association (Incorporated) is attempting to bring help. The object of the Association, which has been doing good work for twenty years, is the care and relief of children suffering from tuberculosis, disease of the spine, bones, joints, or glands, rickets, deformities, etc. These children require months, sometimes years, of treatment, but they cannot be retained in hospital indefinitely, and at home they are very liable to relapse, even after successful operations. They are visited by ladies who are members of the Association, and if possible sent into the country; and when this is impracticable, are provided with spinal couches or carriages, splints, crutches, and the like, which the parents could not procure. The children are made happier and more comfortable, and a better chance of recovery is afforded. Over £3,800 is spent each year in the maintenance of beds constantly occupied in various homes in the country and at the seaside. Besides this, about £358 is required annually for surgical appliances, spinal carriages, and other means of alleviation and physical improvement.

Information concerning the Society's work will be gladly furnished by the secretary, Mrs. Munro, at the office of the Association, 69, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, Westminster, S.W.

REFINED BUT DISTRESSED.

Quite a different kind of work is that undertaken by the Distressed Gentlefolks' Aid Association (75, Brook Green, Hammersmith, W.). The poor have many helpers, but often the educated and gently-nurtured classes who have "seen better days" find

themselves in deep distress—the more tragic in that they are averse to asking for help. This Association was formed on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, for the relief of such, and has helped many a case of the most abject poverty. No money is expended in offices, and the Report, which the Secretary will forward to any of our readers, shows how carefully and prudently the trust is managed.

"INCURABLE."

What a tragic word—"Incurable!" To those with sufficient income to obtain the best medical and surgical aid the work is bad enough, but to those without the alleviation money can buy, how terrible! The British Home for Incurables provides a refuge for such. Our readers cannot do better with their money than provide help for these poor sufferers. The Home is at Crown Lane, Streatham, but communications should be sent to the secretary, Mr. Edgar Penman, 72, Cheapside, London, E.C.

RELIEF OF DISTRESSED JEWS.

Considering the debt Christians owe to the Jewish nation, it is remarkable how few efforts are being made to help them in their distress. The Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews (117, Victoria Street, S.W.) was founded to relieve the sufferings of Jews who were fleeing from persecution in Europe. The principal work of the Society is at Jerusalem, where, owing to the influx of refugees, the Jewish population has increased and is now about 50,000, the majority of whom are destitute.

The Society gives work to men and boys in cultivating the ground, in stone quarrying, building, etc. The need for practical Christian sympathy for these afflicted people is very great.

TO RAISE THE POOR.

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tutions, 1,200 Christmas parcels were sent to poor families, and 60 tons of coal given away.

£8,000 is required every year for the maintenance of the Field Lane Institution, and there is an urgent need for funds. The secretary, Mr. Peregrine Platt, The Refuges, Vine Street, Clerkenwell Road, E.C., will give all particulars of this deserving work.

Such help as our readers are able to render will gladly be received and forwarded to the proper quarter by the Editor. Acknowledgment appears each month in the advertisement section of this magazine. Cheques, postal orders, etc., should be made payable to Messrs. Cassell and Co., Ltd., and forwarded to The Editor, "The Quiver," La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

COUPON.

"How, When, and Where" Corner.

To *Alison, "The Quiver,"*

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The League of Loving Hearts.

To *the Editor, "The Quiver,"*

La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

Please enrol me as a Member of the League of Loving Hearts and forward a Certificate. I enclose One Shilling.

(Signed).....

Address.....

**For Christmas Presents,
see page 13**

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98 Eardley Road,
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Dear Sirs,—Some months ago I wrote you on my doctor's recommendation to send me a bottle of Angier's Emulsion for my little girl, which did her so much good that, after taking about four large bottles, she entirely lost her cough, and has never had one since, although before she was never really free from one. I always use it now if either of the children have any signs of a cold, and find it better than anything else ever tried.

(Signed) E. BOLTON.

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SEASONABLE NOTES

By MARY ODELL

CHRISTMAS is in the air. We grumble a little, assuring ourselves that the season isn't what it used to be; we protest a little that times are hard and our purses in a condition that will not pay for "drawing," and yet, somehow, we come round in the end to our beloved old habit of present buying; and it will happen this year, as every year, that the money carefully spent on useful gifts will not make an alarming or "unfillable" hole in the domestic exchequer, and will leave no remorseful memories to mark the hour of spending.

THE OLD-FASHIONED GREETINGS

One of our earliest purchases is necessarily that of Christmas cards. Each year the Scrooges of society are to be heard inveighing against the folly of sending the season's greetings to all and sundry; yet each year the Postmaster-General assures us that the volume of the Christmas post grows larger, while the number and variety of cards, calendars, and presentation books are ever on the increase. In this connection one's mind turns instinctively about this time to the name of Raphael Tuck and Sons, the famous makers of Christmas greetings; and this year it will be found that the firm have actually surpassed their own reputation in the beauty and originality of design, artistic quality, and perfection of finish of their Christmas publications. Indeed, an endless variety of novel cards, post cards, calendars, and booklets, all bearing the well-known Tuck trade-mark, have been produced for the Christmas of 1909, and there is no doubt whatever that these beautiful mementoes will carry sunshine and goodwill with them wherever they go.

DAINTY JEWELLERY

Again, there is no more delightsome personal gift than a charming little trinket in the way of brooch, pin, pendant, watch, or ring for our young folk, and no more truly acceptable one to the house-proud mother than the choice bit of table decoration such as is to be purchased, nowadays, quite as well, if not better, in the country than in

London. If you have any lingering doubt in the matter just send a post card to Messrs. Grenfell, Frazier and Co., Edgware Road, London, W., naming *THE QUIVER*, and asking them to send you their beautiful catalogue of jewellery. This will show you just what lovely things are to be obtained for a small outlay. Gold brooches are priced from 3s. 9d. to £27 10s., and the new designs shown in Messrs. Grenfell's book are exceptionally attractive.

SOMETHING FOR THE TABLE

Before we get quite away from suggestions of Christmas decorations and festivities, let us give a word to the delicacies prepared for the *inside* of some of the pretty things shown in the jewellers' catalogues.

Messrs. Macfarlane, Lang, of biscuit fame, have quite excelled their usually brilliant output of Christmas dainties, and have this year boxed their delicious biscuits in so many charming bags, boxes, and vases that, if it were not for the fact that a Worcester casket or Wedgwood vase, though extremely pretty in its own place, is not meant for the luncheon or supper table, one might have accused this good old firm of entering into a trade rivalry with the silver-plate manufacturers. As it is, however, the beautiful biscuit boxes above referred to are intended, all of them, to fulfil a second purpose, some to live out an honourable life as handkerchief or glove boxes, others as satchels (with chain handles), and others, again, as beautiful caskets in exact imitation of Royal Worcester ware. These dainty biscuit-filled trifles will have an immense popularity as Christmas gifts of the most useful type.

THE ONOTO PEN

Another present of the utilitarian type is the fountain pen. How often have you heard it affirmed—as a fact proved beyond denial—that life without a fountain pen is not worth living?

We are ready to confess that this was true even in the old days, when the self-filling fountain pen was a luxury unheard of, and when one had to put up with certain

inconveniences in the way of ink leakage and loss or breakage of the inevitable little "filler."

Nowadays, with such a pen as the Onoto at our command, we can laugh at these old troubles and assure ourselves that never before has life—business life, and secretarial life in particular—been so eminently *livable*.

The Onoto, which costs from 10s. 6d., is the smoothest writing, most cleanly, most compact, and most convincingly efficient pen on the modern market.

FROM ONE ART TO ANOTHER

It is not a far cry from literature to music, and this, surely, is the day of music in the home. In no way can the long winter evenings be rendered more enjoyable than by music, and nowadays the phonograph makes it possible to listen, in the home, quite easily and economically, to the singing of all the most famous vocalists and the playing of the finest bands and instrumentalists. A note should, therefore, be made that nowhere can better phonographs be obtained upon easier terms than from Mr. George Robey, of Coventry, whose long experience has enabled him to supply the best possible instrument at the lowest possible price. Those who are contemplating the purchase of a phonograph—even by instalments—or those who desire to increase their stock of records, cannot do better than write for one of his catalogues.

ANOTHER DEPARTMENT IN ART

One other suggestion in the way of acceptable Christmas gifts is the inclusion in one's list of a folio of art pictures. The actual collection I have in mind comes from the Artistic Photographic Company, 63, Baker Street, London, costs—would you believe it?—half a crown, and is worth writing about. These exquisite prints—some in monotint and some in delicately toned art colours—will appeal especially to our picture-loving readers. They include reproductions of Thomas Webster's "Dame's School," Dendy Sadler's "Good Story"—these among the coloured pictures—and Holman Hunt, Romney, and Gainsborough pictures are noticeable among the monotint plates.

EXQUISITE CHRISTMAS GIFTS OFFERED BY
MESSRS. J. S. FRY AND SONS, LTD.
EVEN to look at the *out-sides* of Messrs. J. S. Fry and Sons' Christmas boxes of chocolate confections is a treat and a feast to the

eyes. Such dainty caskets as there are, to be sure! In delicate champagne-coloured moiré, adorned with exquisite hand-wrought ribbon-work; in moiré satin, with beautiful silk embroidery; in velvet, with metal medallions, as well as in quaint basket-work and lacquer. Particularly bonny, too, are the *tête-à-tête* tea sets, in choice Limoges, as well as in the more ordinary imitation Worcester, and one cannot imagine a more dainty gift than one of these delightful little tea equipages, filled, as they are, with the very finest of Fry's chocolates.

As for the pretty vases, the single Queen Anne tea-pots, the biscuit barrels, the Minton china butter-dishes, and all the other quaint and artistic trifles which have been designed as fitting "cases" for Fry's Christmas sweetmeats, one gets fairly bewildered between the different claims which they make upon one's admiration for what is simply pretty and one's appreciation of what is not only good to look at, but is both durable and useful as well. Messrs. Fry have catered magnificently for the present-buying public, and their delightful confections will be all the more welcome to young folk and old because of the very charming receptacles into which they are fitted.

POKER PATIENCE

This game deserves to be as popular as it is if only by reason of the delightfully quaint name attached to it. Since poker patience seems to have taken card devotees by storm, Messrs. Thos. De La Rue and Co., Ltd., Bunhill Row, E.C., have amply met the increasing demand by the introduction of a number of beautiful leather cases containing either two or



four packs of enamelled patience cards, the requisite scoring tablets, and a comprehensive book of rules daintily bound in leather.

These cases are on sale with all stationers and stores, at from 12s. They are covered with morocco, pigskin, or crocodile, and form exceedingly handsome presents.

The game itself is easily learned, and

proves fascinating and exciting. Each case is fitted with a full guide by Walton.

SPLENDID OFFER OF CONSOLATION PRIZES

The proprietors of "Ososilkie" Lustre Yarn ask us to announce that in addition to the £125 in cash prizes that they are offering for their Art Needlework Competition, they will give one thousand consolation prizes, consisting of one pair of "Jason" stockings, richly embroidered with "Ososilkie."

To be eligible for a consolation prize, not less than three dozen balls of "Ososilkie" must be used in the making of the piece of work sent in for the competition.

Further particulars, rules, etc., can be obtained from any up-to-date draper or art needlework stores.

FROM STOCKINGS TO SHOES

With the approach of winter we have all of us given some thought to our footwear. With the donning of heavier boots, most people believe they have done all that is needful. But we can do more than that : we can have our boots fitted with rubber heels. These not only assist in keeping the boots, they prevent slipping—that is, if they are made of rubber. There are, however, many worthless heels on the market, made of admixtures of various kinds which are more or less affected by moisture. Such heels are more dangerous when walking than the ordinary leather heel, and they possess practically no wearing properties. For quality there is none better than "Redfern's Navy Pads." These are made from natural rubber, which gives them the greatest resilience and durability. The ease they give in walking must be experienced to be realised, and as they only cost 6½d. per pair for men's, and 4½d. per pair for ladies' and children's, they represent a very considerable saving in the boot repair bill. Any boot repairer will supply them, and it is well to make sure that you get "Redfern's" name on every heel.

THE POWER OF THE PEN

Eden Phillpotts, the well-known novelist, in a recent letter to the makers of the "Swan" Fountain Pen, writes : "I gladly record the value of your new Fountain Pen. I have been familiar for many years with the 'Swan,' and thought it could hardly be improved ; but the new sizes are a distinct advance." A "Swan" Pen makes a delightful present at any time. It is one of

those gifts that cannot fail to please, and the possessor of a "Swan" finds himself equipped with a pen that suits his hand, is always ready for use, and will last a lifetime. It possesses just those attractive qualities of convenience and usefulness which make it universally appropriate.

It makes writing so easy, and it soon becomes a necessity of daily life. Take your Christmas list of friends ; think of each individually, and ask yourself if a "Swan" would not be "just the thing." Mabie, Todd and Co., the manufacturers, 79 and 80, High Holborn, W.C., will send a catalogue to any of our readers on application.

THE WELCOME CADDY

The United Kingdom Tea Company have prepared a delightful assortment of "Presentation Caddies," each intended to hold a specified quantity of their excellent tea. It is quite worth the while of any tea-lover who intends making presents of the fragrant leaf to old friends to drop a post card to the United Kingdom Tea Company, Empire Warehouses, London, E.C., asking for a coloured plate illustration of these caddies. The prices of the caddies are exceedingly moderate, the 1 lb. size being obtainable in several designs for 3d. and 4d. each.

ANOTHER TO-DAY

"To-morrow will be but another to-day," says the old motto, and as there is a great deal of truth in the saying, it is not of much use to expect any special miracle, either for good or evil, to happen to us to-morrow, unless we lay the train for that miracle to-day. If, for instance, you have been growing a considerable number of ounces heavier every day for months past, "putting on flesh to an alarming extent," according to the telling of your intimates, then you needn't expect that to-morrow will see you getting lighter in weight, unless, indeed, you lay the train for that happy event. But if, on the other hand, you start this very day upon a short course of Antipon treatment, then you are actually putting yourself in the way of improvement, and when to-morrow comes it will certainly find you lighter in weight, more supple in movement, more vigorous, more healthy, and much better able to enjoy life. Antipon isn't simply and solely a reliable cure for corpulence ; it is also an absolutely safe tonic, which will do you nothing but good.

Dr. J. Collis Browne's Chlorodyne

The ORIGINAL and ONLY GENUINE.

CHLORODYNE is taken in drops, graduated according to the malady. The doses are small, so that a bottle is not soon exhausted but remains ready to meet emergencies. No more reliable and generally useful medicine can be kept at hand. It is agreeable to take, pleasant in action, and has no bad after effects.

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accompanies each Bottle.
Of all Chemists. 1/1, 2/9, and 4/6.

The Best Remedy known for
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and **DYSENTERY.**

The only Palliative in
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RHEUMATISM, and
TOOTHACHE.



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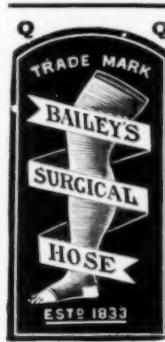
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DELICIOUS COFFEE

RED WHITE & BLUE

For Breakfast & after Dinner.

INDIGESTION

is the primary cause of most of the ills to which we are subject. Hence a medicine that stimulates the digestive organs will relieve quite a number of complaints.

WHELTON'S VEGETABLE PURIFYING PILLS

arouse the stomach to action, promote the flow of gastric juice, and give tone to the whole system. Headache flies away, Biliousness, Kidney Disorders, and Skin Complaints disappear, while cheerful spirits and clear complexions follow in due course. ASK FOR

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And remember there is NO PILL "JUST as GOOD."
Of all Chemists, 1s. 1½d. per Box.

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unfailing care for
half-a-century.

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You may enjoy Callard & Bowser's Butter-Scotch with the comfortable assurance that only first-class materials are employed in its manufacture.

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